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De quelle adieu pénit!

H. Brooker

MRS. BRETTON as CONSTANCE.
*And you, ye glittering, heavenly hosts of Heaven,
 Hush your fair heads in Clouds or shall blast you.*

Printed by W. Jones, No 60 Dame Street.







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J O N E S's
BRITISH THEATRE.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING,

I.

THE FAIR PENITENT.

II.

THE MOURNING BRIDE.

III.

ZARA.

IV.

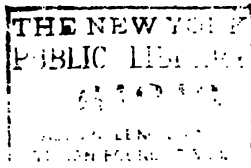
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THE
FAIR PENITENT.

A
TRAGEDY.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

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DUBLIN :

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FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCI.



TO HER GRACE THE
DUTCHESS OF ORMOND.

MADAM,

THE privilege of poetry (or it may be the vanity of the pretenders to it) has given 'em a kind of right to pretend at the same time, to the favour of those, whom their high birth and excellent qualities have placed in a very distinguishing manner above the rest of the world. If this be not a received maxim, yet I am sure I am to wish it were, that I may have at least some kind of excuse for laying this tragedy at your Grace's feet. I have too much reason to fear that it may prove but an indifferent entertainment to your Grace, since, if I have any way succeeded in it, it has been in describing those violent passions which have been always strangers to so happy a temper, and so noble

and so exalted a virtue as your Grace is mistress of. Yet, for all this, I cannot but confess the vanity which I have, to hope that there may be something so moving in the misfortunes and distress of the play, as may be not altogether unworthy of your Grace's pity. This is one of the main designs of tragedy; and to excite this generous pity in the greatest minds, may pass for some kind of success in this way of writing. I am sensible of the presumption I am guilty of by this hope, and how much it is that I pretend to in your Grace's approbation; if it be my good fortune to meet with any little share of it, I shall always look upon it as much more to me than the general applause of the theatre, or even the praise of a good critic. Your Grace's name is the best protection this play can hope for; since the world, ill-natured as it is, agrees in an universal respect and deference for your Grace's person and character. In so censorious an age as this is, where malice furnishes out all the public conversations, where every body pulls and is pulled to pieces of course, and where there is hardly such a thing as being merry, but at another's expence; yet by a public and uncommon justice to the Dutchess of Ormond, her name has never been mentioned, but as it ought, though she has beauty enough to provoke detraction from the fairest of her own sex, and virtue enough to make the loose and dissolute of the other (a very formidable party) her enemies. Instead of this, they agree to say nothing of her but what she deserves. That her spirit is worthy of her birth;

her sweetness, of the love and respect of all the world, her piety, of her religion; her service, of her royal mistress; and her duty and truth, of her lord; that, in short, every part of her character is just, and that she is the best reward for one of the greatest heroes this age has produced. This, Madam, is what you must allow people every where to say; those whom you shall leave behind you in England will have something further to add, the loss we shall suffer by your Grace's journey to Ireland; the Queen's pleasure, and the impatient wishes of that nation, are about to deprive us of our public ornaments. But there is no arguing against reasons so prevalent as these. Those who shall lament your Grace's absence, will yet acquiesce in the wisdom and justice of her Majesty's choice: among all whose royal favours, none could be so agreeable, upon a thousand accounts, to that people, as the Duke of Ormond. With what joy, what acclamations shall they meet a Governor, who, beside their former obligations to his family, has so lately ventured his life and fortune for their preservation! What duty, what submission shall they not pay to that authority which the Queen has delegated to a person so dear to them? And with what honour, what respect, shall they receive your Grace, when they look upon you as the noblest and best pattern her Majesty could send them, of her own royal goodness, and personal virtues? They shall behold your Grace with the same pleasure the English shall take, whenever it shall be their good fortune to see you return again to your native coun-

try. In England, your Grace is become a public concern ; and as your going away will be attended with a general sorrow, so your return shall give as general a joy ; and to none of those many, more than to,

Madam,

Your Grace's most obedient, and

Most humble servant,

N. ROWE.

NOTE.—This Dedication is a model of servility in addressing the Great.—One further observation may be made; through two pages wherever *shall* recurs, he ought to have written *will*.

THE EDITOR.

NICHOLAS ROWE.

NICHOLAS ROWE was the son of JOHN ROWE, Esq, Serjeant at Law—A place called Little Berkford in Bedfordshire had the honour of the birth of this Poet in the year 1673.—A private seminary at Highgate gave him the rudiments of learning, and, that he might be perfect as a classic, he was sent to Westminster, under Busby.

His father, designing him for his own profession, entered him at 16 years of age a Student of the Middle Temple, but he was destined to rise alone in the Temple of the Muses—He had some law there is no doubt, but he had more poetry.

Business of a graver nature, however, he at a distant period accepted—he was Under-Secretary to the Duke of Queensberry, when that Nobleman was Secretary of State.

Under the reign of George I. he united two emoluments not often combined, for he became Poet

Laureat and Land-Surveyor of the Customs—He was, further, Clerk of the Prince's Council, &c. but death frustrated the honours of Office, Dec. 6, 1718, in the 45th year of his age.

He fought the public approbation by various channels—He edited SHAKSPEARE—he translated LUCAN, and he composed the following PLAYS.

<i>Ambitious Stepmother</i>	1700	<i>Ulysses</i>	—	1706
<i>Tamerlane</i>	—	1702	<i>Royal Convert</i>	1708
<i>Fair Penitent</i>	1703	<i>Jane Shore</i>	—	1713
<i>Biter</i>	—	1705	<i>Jane Gray</i>	— 1715

FAIR PENITENT.

THIS Tragedy has the usual characteristics of ROWE—Suavity—Pomp—a sententious Morality—little action, less passion. He wins upon the ear—he never irresistibly seizes on the heart.

Dramatically, ROWE must be considered as the founder of a subordinate idea of the nature of Tragic structure—He is content to be graceful, and occasionally aims to be grand—his characters sooth and satiate—they are wearisomely uniform—Sympathy he has seldom the secret to command—SHORE does draw tears, and only Shore.

This play bespeaks *Italian* reading, and yet of Italian, ROWE knew so little that he founds SCIORLO a trisyllable. What is his merit it may be asked?—moral purpose? not always. Versification is nearly the whole of it.—But though majestic and harmonious, it is too perpetually polished—his lines are not sufficiently broken by pauses.

PROLOGUE.

*LONG has the fate of kings and empires been
The common bus'ness of the tragic scene,
As if misfortune made the throne her seat,
And none could be unhappy, but the great.
Dearly, 'tis true, each buys the crown he wears,
And many are the mighty monarch's cares :
By foreign foes and home-bred factions press'd,
Few are the joys he knows, and short his hours of rest,
Stories like these with wonder we may hear ;
But far remote, and in a higher sphere,
We ne'er can pity what we ne'er can share :
Like distant battles of the Pole and Sweden,
Which frugal citizens o'er coffee read,
Careless for who should fall or who succeed.
Therefore an humbler theme our author chose,
A melancholy tale of private woe ;
No princes here lost royalty bemoan,
But you shall meet with sorrows like your own :
Here see imperious love his vassals treat
As hardly as ambition does the great ;
See how succeeding passions rage by turns,
How fierce the youth with joy and rapture burns,
And how to death, for beauty lost, he mourns.*

*Let no nice taste the poet's art arraign,
If some frail vicious characters be feign :
Who writes, should still let nature be his care,
Mix shades with lights, and not paint all things fair,
But shew you men and women as they are.
With deference to the fair, he bade me say,
Few to perfection ever found the way :
Many in many parts are known to excel,
But 'twere too hard for one to act all well ;
Whom justly life would through each scene commend,
The maid, the wife, the mistress, and the friend ;
This age, 'tis true, has one great instance seen,
And Heaven, in justice, made that one a queen.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

SCIOLTO, a nobleman of Genoa	- - -	Mr. Aickin.
ALTAMONT, a young lord, in love with Calista	- - -	Mr. Barrymore.
HORATIO, his friend	- - -	Mr. Bensley.
Lothario, a young lord and enemy to Altamont	- - -	Mr. Palmer.
ROSEANO, his friend	- - -	Mr. Williams.

Women.

CALISTA, daughter to Sciolto	- -	Mrs. Siddons.
LAVINIA, sister to Altamont, and wife to Horatio	- -	Mrs. Ward.
LUCILLA, confidant to Calista	- -	Miss Palmer.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

SCIOLTO, a nobleman of Genoa	- - -	Mr. Aickin.
ALTAMONT, a young lord, in love with Calista	- - -	Mr. Farren.
HORATIO, his friend	- - -	Mr. Harley.
LOTHARIO, a young lord, and enemy to Altamont	- - -	Mr. Holman.
ROSSANO, his friend,	- - -	Mr. Evatt.

Women.

CALISTA, daughter to Sciolto	- -	Miss Brunton.
LAVINIA, sister to Altamont, and wife to Horatio	- -	Miss Chapman.
LUCILLA, confidant to Calista	- -	Miss Stuart.

Servant to Sciolto.

SCENE, Sciolto's palace and garden, with some part of the street near it, in Genoa.

THE
FAIR PENITENT.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*A garden belonging to SCIOLTO's palace. Enter
ALTAMONT and HORATIO.*

Altamont.

LET this auspicious day be ever sacred,
No mourning, no misfortunes happen on it :
Let it be mark'd for triumphs and rejoicings ;
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes, and crown their wishes,
This happy day, that gives me my Calista.

Hor. Yes, Altamont ; to-day thy better stars
Are join'd to shed their kindest influence on thee ;
Sciolto's noble hand that rais'd thee first,
Half dead and drooping o'er thy father's grave,
Completes it's bounty, and restores thy name
To that high rank and lustre which it boasted,

Before ungrateful Genoa had forgot
 The merit of thy god-like father's arms ;
 Before that country, which he long had serv'd
 In watchful councils, and in winter-camps,
 Had cast off his white age to want and wretchedness,
 And made their court to faction by his ruin.

Alt. Oh, great Sciolto ! Oh, my more than father !
 Let me not live, but at thy very name 20
 My eager heart springs up, and leaps with joy.
 When I forget the vast, vast debt I owe thee——
 Forget ! (but 'tis impossible) then let me
 Forget the use and privilege of reason,
 Be driven from the commerce of mankind,
 To wander in the desert among brutes,
 " To bear the various fury of the seasons,
 " The night's unwholesome dew and noon-day's heat."
 To be the scorn of earth and curse of Heav'n !

Hor. So open, so unbounded was his goodness,
 It reach'd ev'n me, because I was thy friend.
 When that great man I lov'd, thy noble father,
 Bequeath'd thy gentle sister to my arms,
 His last dear pledge and legacy of friendship,
 That happy tie made me Sciolto's son ;
 He call'd us his, and, with a parent's fondness,
 Indulg'd us in his wealth, blest'd us with plenty,
 Heal'd all our cares, and sweeten'd love itself.

Alt. By Heav'n he found my fortunes so abandon'd,
 That nothing but a miracle could raise 'em : 40
 My father's bounty, and the state's ingratitude,
 Had stripp'd him bare, nor left him ev'n a grave.
 Undone myself and sinking with his ruin,

I had no wealth to bring, nothing to succour him,
But fruitless tears.

Hor. Yet what thou could'st, thou didst,
And didst it like a son ; when his hard creditors,
Urg'd and assisted by Lethario's father,
(Foe to thy house, and rival of their greatness)
By sentence of the cruel law forbid
His venerable corpse to rest in earth,
Thou gav'st thyself a ransom for his bones ;
With pity uncommon didst give up
Thy hopeful youth to slaves who ne'er knew mercy,
Sour, unrelenting, money-loving villains,
Who laugh at human nature and forgiveness,
And are like fiends, the factors of destruction.
Heav'n, who beheld the pious act, approv'd it,
And bade Sciolto's bounty be its proxy,
To bless thy filial virtue with abundance. 60

Alt. But for he comes, the author of my happiness,
The man who sav'd my life from deadly sorrow,
Who bids my days be blest with peace and plenty,
And satisfies my soul with love and beauty.

*Enter SCIOLTO ; he runs to ALTAMONT, and
embraces him.*

Sci. Joy to thee, Altamont ! Joy to myself !
Joy to this happy morn that makes thee mine ;
That kindly grants what nature had denied me,
And makes me father of a son like thee.

Alt. My father ! Oh, let me unlade my breast,
Pour out the fulness of my soul before you ;
Shew every tender, every grateful thought,
This wond'rous goodness stirs. But 'tis impossible,

And utterance all is vile ; since I can only
Swear you reign here, but never tell how much.

“ *Sci.* It is enough ; I know thee, thou art honest ;

“ Goodness innate, and worth hereditary

“ Are in thy mind ; thy noble father’s virtues

“ Spring freshly forth, and blossom in thy youth.

“ *Alt.* Thus Heav’n from nothing rais’d his faint
creation,

“ And then, with wondrous joy, beheld its beauty,

“ Well pleas’d to see the excellence he gave.” 81

Sci. O, noble youth ! I swear since first I knew
thee,

Ev’n from that day of sorrows when I saw thee,

Adorn’d and lovely in thy filial tears,

The mourner and redeemer of thy father,

I set thee down, and seal’d thee for my own :

Thou art my son, ev’n near me as Calista.

Horatia and Lavinia too are mine ; [*Embraces HOR.*

All are my children, and shall share my heart.

But wherefore waste we thus this happy day ?

The laughing minutes summon thee to joy,

And with new pleasures court thee as they pass ;

Thy waiting bride ev’n chides thee for delaying,

And swears thou com’st not with a bridegroom’s haste.

Alt. Oh ! could I hope there was one thought of
Altamont,

One kind remembrance in Calista’s breast,

The winds with all their wings would be too slow

To bear me to her feet. For, Oh, my father !

Amidst the stream of joy that bears me on,

Blest as I am, and honour'd in your friendship, 100
There is one pain that hangs upon my heart.

Sci. What means my son ?

Alti. When at your intercession,
Last night, Calista yielded to my happiness,
Just ere we parted, as I seal'd my vows
With rapture on her lips, I found her cold,
As a dead lover's statue on his tomb ;
A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
Her eyes a piteous show'r of tears let fall,
And then she sigh'd, as if her heart were breaking.
With all the tend'rest eloquence of love
I begg'd to be a sharer in her grief :
But she, with looks averse, and eyes that froze me,
Sadly replied, her sorrows were her own,
Nor in a father's power to dispose of.

Sci. Away ! it is the cozenage of their sex ;
One of the common arts they practise on us :
To sigh and weep then when their hearts beat high
With expectation of the coming joy.
Thou hast in camps and fighting fields been bred,
Unknowing in the subtleties of women ; 121
The virgin bride, who swoons with deadly fear,
To see the end of all her wishes near,
When blushing, from the light and public eyes,
To the kind covert of the night she flies,
With equal fires to meet the bridegroom moves,
Melts in his arms, and with a loose she loves. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.

Lotb. The father, and the husband !

Ros. Let them pass.

They saw us not.

Loth. I care not if they did;
Ere long I mean to met 'em face to face,
And gall 'em with my triumph o'er Calista.

Ros. You lov'd her once.

Loth. I lik'd her, would have marry'd her,
But that it pleas'd her father to refuse me,
To make this honourable fool her husband :
For which, if I forget him, may the flame
I mean to brand his name with, stick on mine.

Ros. She, gentle soul, was kinder than her father.

Loth. She was, and oft in private gave me hearing ;
Till, by long list'ning to the soothing tale,
At length her easy heart was wholly mine.

Ros. I've heard you oft describe her, haughty, insolent,
And fierce with high disdain : it moves my wonder,
That virtue, thus defended, should be yielded
A prey to loose desires.

Loth. Hear then, I'll tell thee :
Once in a lone and secret hour of night,
When ev'ry eye was clos'd, and the pale moon
And stars alone shone conscious of the theft,
Hot with the Tuscan grape, and high in blood,
Hap'ly I stole unheeded to her chamber.

Ros. That minute sure was lucky.

Loth. Oh, 'twas great !
I found the fond, believing, love-sick maid,
Loose, unattir'd, warm, tender, full of wishes ;
Fierceness and pride, the guardians of her honour,
Were charm'd to rest, and love alone was waking.

Within her rising bosom all was calm, 160
As peaceful seas that know no storms, and only
Are gently lifted up and down by tides.

I snatch'd the glorious golden opportunity,
And with prevailing, youthful ardor press'd her,
'Till with short sighs, and murmuring reluctance,
The yielding fair one gave me perfect happiness.
Ev'n all the live-long night we pass'd in bliss,
In ecstasies too fierce to last for ever ;
At length the morn and cold indifference came ;
When, fully sated with the luscious banquet,
I hastily took leave, and left the nymph
To think on what was past, and sigh alone.

Ros. You saw her soon again ?

Loth. Too soon I saw her :

For, Oh ! that meeting was not like the former :
I found my heart no more beat high with transport,
No more I sigh'd, and languish'd for enjoyment ;
'Twas past, and reason took her turn to reign,
While every weakness fell before her throne.

Ros. What of the lady ? 180

Loth. With uneasy fondness

She hung upon me, wept, and sigh'd, and swore
She was undone ; talk'd of a priest, and marriage ;
Of flying with me from her father's pow'r ;
Call'd every saint, and blessed angel down,
To witness for her that she was my wife.
I started at that name.

Ros. What answer made you ?

Loth. None ; but pretending sudden pain and illness,
Escap'd the persecution. Two nights since,

By message urg'd and frequent importunity,
 Again I saw her. Straight with tears and sighs,
 With swelling breasts, with swooning, with distraction,
 With all the subtleties and powerful arts
 Of wilful woman lab'ring for her purpose,
 Again she told the same dull nauseous tale.
 Unmov'd, I begg'd her spare th' ungrateful subject,
 Since I resolv'd, that love and peace of mind
 Might flourish long inviolate betwixt us,
 Never to load it with the marriage chain ; 200
 That I would still retain her in my heart,
 My ever gentle mistress and my friend !
 But for those other names of wife and husband,
 They only meant ill nature, cares, and quarrels.

Ros. How bore she this reply ?

Loth. " Ev'n as the earth,

" When, winds pent up, or eating fires beneath,
 " Shaking the mass, she labours with destruction."
 At first her rage was dumb, and wanted words ;
 But when the storm found way, 'twas wild and loud.
 Mad as the priestesses of the Delphic god,
 Enthusiastic passion swell'd her breast,
 Enlarg'd her voice, and ruffled all her form.
 Proud and disdainful of the love I proffer'd.
 She call'd me Villain ! Monster ! Base Betrayer !
 At last, in very bitterness of soul,
 With deadly imprecations on herself,
 She vow'd severely ne'er to see me more ;
 Then bid me fly that minute : I obey'd,
 And, bowing, left her to grow cool at leisure. 220

Ros. She has relented since, else why this message,

To meet the keeper of her secrets here
This morning?

Loth. See the person whom you nam'd!

Enter LUCILLA.

Well, my ambassadrefs, what must we treat of?
Come you to menace war, and proud defiance,
Or does the peaceful olive grace your message?
Is your fair mistress calmer? Does she soften?
And must we love again? Perhaps she means
To treat in juncture with her new ally,
And make her husband party to th' agreement.

Luc. Is this well done, my lord? Have you put off
All sense of human nature? Keep a little,
A little pity, to distinguish manhood,
Lest other men, tho' cruel, should disclaim you,
And judge you to be number'd with the brutes.

Loth. I see thou'lt learn't to rail.

Luc. I've learnt to weep:
That lesson my sad mistress often gives me:
By day she seeks some melancholy shade, 240
To hide her sorrows from the prying world;
At night she watches all the long, long hours,
And listens to the winds and beating rain,
With sighs as loud, and tears that fall as fast.
Then, ever and anon, she wrings her hands,
And cries, false, false Lothario!

Loth. Oh, no more!
I swear thou'lt spoil thy pretty face with crying,
And thou hast beauty that may make thy fortune:
Some keeping cardinal shall doat upon thee,
And barter his church treasure for thy freshness.

Luc. What! shall I sell my innocence and youth,
For wealth or titles, to perfidious man!
To man, who makes his mirth of our undoing!
The base, profest betrayer of our sex!
Let me grow old in all misfortunes else,
Rather than know the sorrows of Calista!

Loth. Does she send thee to chide in her behalf?
I swear thou dost it with so good a grace,
That I could almost love thee for thy frowning. 260

Luc. Read there, my lord; there, in her own sad
lines, [Giving a letter.
Which best can tell the story of her woes,
That grief of heart which your unkindness gives her.
[Lothario reads.

*Your cruelty—Obedience to my father—Gave my hand
to Altamont.*

By Heav'n 'tis well! such ever be the gifts
With which I greet the man whom my soul hates.

[Aside.

But to go on!

~~—Wish—Heart—Honour—too faithless—
Weakness—to-morrow—last trouble—lost Calista.~~

Women, I see, can change as well as men.
She writes me here, forsaken as I am,
That I should bind my brows with mournful willow,
For she has giv'n her hand to Altamont:
Yet, tell the fair inconstant—

Luc. How, my lord!

Loth. Nay, no more angry words: say to Calista,
The humblest of her slaves shall wait her pleasure;
If she can leave her happy husband's arms,
To think upon so lost a thing as I am.

Luc. Alas! for pity, come with gentler looks: 280
Wound not her heart with this unmanly triumph;
And, tho' you love her not, yet swear you do,
So shall dissembling once be virtuous in you.

Loth. Ha! who comes here?

Luc. The bridegroom's friend, Horatio.
He must not see us here. To-morrow early
Be at the garden gate.

Loth. Bear to my love
My kindest thoughts, and swear I will not fail her.
[*Lothario putting up the letter hastily, drops
it as he goes out.*

[*Exeunt Lothario and Rossano one way, Lucilla another.*

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Sure 'tis the very error of my eyes;
Waking I dream, or I beheld Lothario;
He seem'd conferring with Calista's woman:
At my approach they started, and retir'd.
What business could he have here, and with her?
I know he bears the noble Altamont
Profest and deadly hate—What paper's this?
[*Taking up the letter.*
Ha! To Lothario!—'s death! Calista's name!

[*Opening it.*
Confusion and misfortunes! [*Reads.*

' Your cruelty has at length determined me, and I
' have resolv'd this morning to yield a perfect obe-
' dience to my father, and to give my hand to Alta-
' mont, in spite of my weakness for the false Lotha-
' rio. I could almost wish I had that heart, and that

‘ honour to bestow with it, which you have robb’d
‘ me of :

Damnation to the rest—— *[Reads again.*

‘ But, Oh! I fear, could I retrieve ’em, I should again
‘ be undone by the too faithless, yet too lovely Lo-
‘ thario. This is the last weakness of my pen, and
‘ to-morrow shall be the last in which I will indulge
‘ my eyes. Lucilla shall conduct you, if you are kind
‘ enough to let me see you ; it shall be the last trouble
‘ you shall meet with from

‘ *The lost Calista.*’

The lost, indeed ! for thou art gone as far
As there can be perdition. Fire and sulphur !
Hell is the sole avenger of such crimes.
Oh, that the ruin were but all thy own !
Thou wilt even make thy father curse his age ;
At sight of this black scroll, the gentle Altamont
(For, Oh ! I know his heart is set upon thee) 320
Shall droop, and hang his discontented head,
Like merit scorn’d by insolent authority,
And never grace the public with his virtues.—
“ Perhaps even now he gazes fondly on her,
“ And, thinking soul and body both alike,
“ Blesses the perfect workmanship of Heav’n ;
“ Then sighing, to his ev’ry care speaks peace,
“ And bids his heart be satisfied with happiness.
“ Oh, wretched husband ! while she hangs about thee
“ With idle blandishments, and plays the fond one,
“ Ev’n then her hot imagination wanders,
“ Contriving riot, and loose ’scapes of love ;
“ And while she clasps thee close, makes thee a mon-
ster.”

What if I give this paper to her father ?
It follows that his justice dooms her dead,
And breaks his heart with sorrow ; hard return
For all the good his hand has heap'd on us !
Hold, let me take a moment's thought——

Enter LAVINIA.

Lav. My lord !

Trust me, it joys my heart that I have found you.
Enquiring wherefore you had left the company, 341
Before my brother's nuptial rites were ended,
They told me you had felt some sudden illness.
Where are you sick ? Is it your head ? your heart ?
Tell me, my love, and ease my anxious thoughts,
That I may take you gently in my arms,
Sooth you to rest, and soften all your pains.

Hor. It were unjust—No, let me spare my friend,
Lock up the fatal secret in my breast,
Nor tell him that which will undo his quiet.

Lav. What means my lord ?

Hor. Ha ! saidst thou, my Lavinia ?

Lav. Alas ! you know not what you make me
suffer.

Why are you pale ? Why did you start and tremble ?
Whence is that sigh ? and wherefore are your eyes
Severely rais'd to Heav'n ? The sick man thus,
Acknowledging the summons of his fate,
Lifts up his feeble hands and eyes for mercy,
And with confusion thinks upon his exit.

Hor. Oh, no ! thou hast mistook my sickness quite ;
These pangs are of the soul. Wou'd I had met 361

Sharpest convulsions, spotted pestilence,
 Or any other deadly foe to life,
 Rather than heave beneath this load of thought !

Lav. Alas ! what is it ? " Wherefore turn you
 from me ?

" Why did you falsely call me your Lavinia,
 " And swear I was Horatio's better half,
 " Since now you mourn unkindly by yourself,
 " And rob me of my partnership of sadness ?
 " Witness, ye holy pow'rs, who know my truth,
 " There cannot be a chance in life so miserable,
 " Nothing so very hard but I could bear it,
 " Much rather than my love should treat me coldly,
 " And use me like a stranger to his heart."

Hor. Seek not to know what I would hide from all,
 But most from thee. I never knew a pleasure,
 Ought that was joyful, fortunate, or good,
 But straight I ran to bless thee with the tidings,
 And laid up all my happiness with thee ;
 But wherefore, wherefore should I give thee pain ?
 Then spare me, I conjure thee ; ask no further ; 381
 Allow my melancholy thoughts this privilege,
 And let 'em brood in secret o'er their sorrows.

Lav. It is enough ; chide not, and all is well !
 Forgive me if I saw you sad, Horatio,
 And ask'd to weep out part of your misfortunes :
 I wo' not press to know what you forbid me.
 Yet, my lov'd lord, yet you must grant me this,
 Forget your cares for this one happy day,
 Devote this day to mirth, and to your Altamont ;
 For his dear sake, let peace be in your looks.
 Ev'n now the jocund bridegroom waits your wishes,

He thinks the priest has but half blest'd his marriage,
Till his friend hails him with the sound of joy.

Hor. Oh, never, never, never ! Thou art innocent:
Simplicity from ill, pure native truth,
And candour of the mind, adorn thee ever ;
But there are such, such false ones, in the world,
'Twould fill thy gentle soul with wild amazement
To hear their story told. 400

Lav. False ones, my lord ?

Hor. Fatally fair they are, and in their smiles
The graces, little loves, and young desires inhabit ;
But all that gaze upon 'em are undone :
For they are false, luxurious in their appetites,
And all the ~~Heav'n~~ they hope for is variety :
One lover to another still succeeds,
Another, and another after that,
And the last fool is welcome as the former ;
'Till having lov'd his hour out, he gives place,
And mingles with the herd that went before him.

Lav. Can there be such, and have they peace of
mind ?

Have they, in all the series of their changing,
One happy hour ? If women are such things,
How was I form'd so different from my sex !
My little heart is satisfied with you ;
You take up all her room, as in a cottage
Which harbours some benighted princely stranger,
Where the good man, proud of his hospitality,
Yields all his homely dwelling to his guest, 420
And hardly keeps a corner for himself.

Hor. Oh, were they all like thee, men would adore
'em,

And all the business of their lives be loving ;
The nuptial band should be the pledge of peace,
And all domestic cares and quarrels cease ;
The world should learn to love by virtuous rules,
And marriage be no more the jest of fools. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Hall. Enter CALISTA and LUCILLA.

Calista.

Be dumb for ever, silent as the grave,
Nor let thy fond officious love disturb
My solemn sadness with the sound of joy.
If thou wilt soothe me, tell some dismal tale
Of pining discontent, and black despair ;
For, Oh ! I've gone around through all my thoughts,
But all are indignation, love, or shame,
And my dear peace of mind is lost for ever.

Luc. Why do you follow still that wand'ring fire,
That has misled your weary steps, and leaves you
Benighted in a wilderness of woe,
That false Lothario ? Turn from the deceiver ;
Turn, and behold where gentle Altamont,
" Kind as the softest virgin of our sex,
" And faithful as the simple village swain,

"That never knew the courtly vice of changing,"
Sighs at your feet, and woos you to be happy.

Cal. Away! I think not of him. My sad soul
Has form'd a dismal melancholy scene,
Such a retreat as I would wish to find; 20
An unfrequented vale, o'ergrown with trees
Mossy and old, within whose lonesome shade
Ravens, and birds ill-omen'd only dwell:
No sound to break the silence, but a brook
That bubbling winds among the weeds: no mark
Of any human shape that had been there,
Unless a skeleton of some poor wretch,
Who had long since, like me, by love undone,
Sought that sad place out, to despair and die in.

Luc. Alas, for pity!

Cal. There I fain would hide me
From the base world, from malice, and from shame;
For 'tis the solemn counsel of my soul
Never to live with public loss of honour:
'Tis fix'd to die, rather than bear the insolence
Of each affected she that tells my story,
And blesses her good stars that she is virtuous.
To be a tale for fools! Scorn'd by the women,
And pity'd by the men! Oh, insupportable!

Luc. Can you perceive the manifest destruction,
The gaping gulf that opens just before you, 41
And yet rush on, tho' conscious of the danger?
Oh, hear me, hear your ever faithful creature!
By all the good I wish, by all the ill
My trembling heart forebodes, let me intreat you,
Never to see this faithless man again;
Let me forbid his coming.

Cal. On thy life

I charge thee no : my genius drives me on ;
 I must, I will behold him once again :
 Perhaps it is the crisis of my fate,
 And this one interview shall end my cares.
 My lab'ring heart that swells with indignation,
 Heaves to discharge the burthen ; that once done,
 The busy thing shall rest within its cell,
 And never beat again.

Luc. Traist not to that :

Rage is the shortest passion of our souls :
 Like narrow brooks that rise with sudden show'rs,
 It swells in haste, and falls again as soon ; 60
 Still as it ebbs the softer thoughts flow in,
 And the deceiver Love supplies its place.

Cal. I have been wrong'd enough to arm my temper
 Against the smooth delusion ; but alas !
 (Chide not my weakness, gentle maid, but pity me)
 A woman's softness hangs about me still :
 Then let me blush, and tell thee all my folly.
 I swear I could not see the dear betrayer
 Kneel at my feet, and sigh to be forgiven,
 But my relenting heart would pardon all,
 And quite forget 'twas he that had undone me.

Luc. " Ye sacred pow'rs, whose gracious providence

" Is watchful for our good, guard me from men,
 " From their deceitful tongues, their vows, and flatteries ;
 " Still let me pass neglected by their eyes,
 " Let my bloom wither, and my form decay,

"That none may think it worth his while to ruin
me,

"And fatal love may never be my bane." [Exit.

Cal. Ha, Altamont ! Calista, now be wary,
And guard thy soul's access with dissembling : 80
Nor let this hostile husband's eyes explore
The warring passions, and tumultuous thoughts,
That rage within thee, and deform thy reason.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Begone, my cares, I give you to the winds,
Far to be borne, far from the happy Altamont ;
"For from this sacred æra of my love,
"A better order of succeeding days
"Comes smiling forward, white and lucky all."
Calista is the mistress of the year ;
She crowns the season with auspicious beauty,
And bids ev'n all my hours be good and joyful.

Cal. If I were ever mistress of such happiness,
Oh ! wherefore did I play th' unthrifty fool,
And, wasting all on others, leave myself
Without one thought of joy to give me comfort ?

Alt. Oh, mighty Love ! Shall that fair face profane
This thy great festival with frowns and sadness !
I swear it shall not be, for I will woo thee
With sighs so moving, with so warm a transport,
That thou shalt catch the gentle flame from me, 100
And kindle into joy.

Cal. I tell thee, Altamont,
Such hearts as ours were never pair'd above :
Ill-suited to each other ; join'd, not match'd ;

Some fullen influence, a foe to both,
Has wrought this fatal marriage to undo us.
Mark but the frame and temper of our minds,
How very much we differ. Ev'n this day,
That fills thee with such ecstacy and transport,
To me brings nothing that should make me bless it,
Or think it better than the day before,
Or any other in the course of time,
That duly took its turn, and was forgotten.

Alc. If to behold thee as my pledge of happiness,
To know none fair, none excellent but thee ;
If still to love thee with unwearied constancy,
" Through ev'ry season, ev'ry change of life,
" Thro' wrinkled age, thro' sickness and misfortune,"
Be worth the least return of grateful love,
Oh, then let my Calista bless this day, 120
And set it down for happy.

Cal. 'Tis the day
In which my father gave my hand to Altamont ;
As such, I will remember it for ever.

Enter SCIOLTO, HORATIO, and LAVINIA.

Scio. Let mirth go on, let pleasure know no pause,
But fill up ev'ry minute of this day.
'Tis yours, my children, sacred to your loves ;
The glorious sun himself for you looks gay ;
He shines for Altamont and for Calista.
Let there be music ; let the master touch
The sprightly string, and softly-breathing flute,
'Till harmony rouse ev'ry gentle passion,
Teach the cold maid to lose her fears in love,

And the fierce youth to languish at her feet.
 Begin : ev'n age itself is chear'd with music ;
 It wakes a glad remembrance of our youth,
 Calls back past joys, and warms us into transport.

[*Mus.*

“ SONG,

“ BY MR. CONGREVE.

“ *Ab, stay ! ab, turn ! ab, whither would you fly,*

“ *Too charming, too relentless maid ?*

“ *I follow not to conquer, but to die ;*

140

“ *You of the fearful are afraid.*

“ *In vain I call ; for she, like fleeting air,*

“ *When press'd by some tempestuous wind,*

“ *Flies swifter from the voice of my despair,*

“ *Nor casts one pitying look behind.”*

Sci. Take care my gates be open, bid all welcome ;
 All who rejoice with me to-day are friends :
 Let each indulge his genius, each be glad,
 Jocund and free, and swell the feast with mirth ;
 The sprightly bowl shall chearfully go round,
 None shall be grave, nor too severely wise ;
 Losses and disappointments, cares and poverty,
 The rich man's insolence, and great man's scorn,
 In wine shall be forgotten all. To-morrow
 Will be too soon to think, and to be wretched.
 Oh, grant, ye pow'rs, that I may see these happy,

[*Pointing to Alt. and Cal.*

Completely blest, and I have life enough ;

And leave the rest indifferently to fate.

[*Exeunt.*

Hor. What if, while all are here intent on revelling,
 I privately went forth, and sought Lothario? 160
 This letter may be forg'd; perhaps the wantonness
 Of his vain youth, to stain a lady's fame;
 Perhaps his malice to disturb my friend.
 Oh, no! my heart forebodes it must be true.
 Methought, ev'n now, I mark'd the starts of guilt
 That shook her soul; tho' damn'd dissimulation
 Screen'd her dark thoughts, and set to public view
 A specious face of innocence and beauty.
 "Oh, false appearance! What is all our sovereignty,
 "Our boasted pow'r? When they oppose their arts,
 "Still they prevail, and we are found their fools."
 With such smooth looks, and many a gentle word,
 The first fair she beguil'd her easy lord;
 Too blind with love and beauty to beware,
 He fell unthinking in the fatal snare;
 Nor could believe that such a heav'nly face
 Had bargain'd with the devil, to damn her wretched
 race. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

*The Street near SCIOLTO'S Palace. Enter LOTHARIO
 and ROSSANO.*

Loth. To tell thee then the purport of my thoughts;
 The loss of this fond paper would not give me
 A moment of disquiet, were it not 180
 My instrument of vengeance on this Altamont;

Therefore I mean to wait some opportunity
Of speaking with the maid we saw this morning.

Ros. I wish you, Sir, to think upon the danger
Of being seen ; to-day their friends are round 'em ;
And any eye that lights by chance on you,
Shall put your life and safety to the hazard.

[They confer aside.]

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Still I must doubt some mystery of mischief,
Some artifice beneath. Lothario's father !
I knew him well ; he was sagacious, cunning,
Fluent in words, and bold in peaceful counsels,
But of a cold, inactive hand in war ;
Yet, with these coward's virtues, he undid
My unsuspecting, valiant, honest friend.
This son, if fame mistakes not, is more hot,
More open and unartful—Ha ! he's here ! *[Seeing him.]*

Loth. Damnation ! He again !—This second time
To-day he has cross'd me, like my evil genius.

Hor. I fought you, Sir.

Loth. 'Tis well then I am found. 200

Hor. 'Tis well you are. The man who wrongs my
friend

To the earth's utmost verge I would pursue.
No place, tho' e'er so holy should protect him ;
No shape that artful fear e'er form'd should hide him,
'Till he fair answer made, and did me justice.

Loth. Ha ! dost thou know me, that I am Lothario ?
As great a name as this proud city boasts of.
Who is this mighty man, then, this Horatio,

'That I should basely hide me from his anger,
Lest he should chide me for his friend's displeasure ?

Hor. The brave, 'tis true, do never shun the light ;
Just are their thoughts, and open are their tempers,
Freely without disguise they love and hate,
Still are they found in the fair face of day,
And Heav'n and men are judges of their actions.

Loth. Such let 'em be of mine; there's not a purpose
Which my soul e'er fram'd, or my hand acted,
But I could well have bid the world look on,
And what I once durst do, have dar'd to justify.

Hor. Where was this open boldness, this free spirit,
When but this very morning I surpriz'd thee, 221
In base, dishonest privacy, consulting
And bribing a poor mercenary wretch,
To sell her lady's secrets, stain her honour,
And, with a forg'd contrivance, blast her virtue ?—
At sight of me thou fled'st.

Loth. Ha ! fled from thee ?

Hor. Thou fled'st, and guilt was on thee, like a thief,
A pilferer, descry'd in some dark corner,
Who there had lodg'd, with mischievous intent,
To rob and ravage at the hour of rest.
And do a midnight murder on the sleepers.

Loth. Slave ! villain !

[Offers to draw, ROSSANO holds him.]

Ros. Hold, my lord ! think where you are,
Think how unsafe and hurtful to your honour
It were to urge a quarrel in this place,
And shock the peaceful city with a broil.

Loth. Then since thou dost provoke my vengeance,
know

I would not, for this city's wealth, for all
Which the sea wafts to our Ligurian shore, 240
But that the joys I reap'd with that fond wanton,
The wife of Altamont, should be as public
As is the noon-day sun, air, earth, or water,
Or any common benefit of nature.
Think'st thou I meant the shame should be conceal'd ?
Oh, no ! by hell and vengeance, all I wanted
Was some fit messenger to bear the news
To the dull doating husband : now I have found him,
And thou art he.

Hor. I hold thee base enough
To break through law, and spurn at sacred order,
And do a brutal injury like this.
Yet mark me well, young lord ; I think Calista
Too nice, too noble, and too great of soul,
To be the prey of such a thing as thou art.
'Twas base and poor, unworthy of a man,
To forge a scroll so villanous and loose,
And mark it with a noble lady's name :
These are the mean dishonest arts of cowards,
Strangers to manhood, and to glorious dangers ; 260
Who, bred at home in idleness and riot,
Ransack for mistresses th' unwholesome stews,
And never know the worth of virtuous love.

Loth. Think'st thou I forg'd the letter ? Think so
still,

'Till the broad shame come staring in thy face,
And boys shall hoot the cuckold as he passes.

Hor. Away ! no woman could descend so low ;
A skipping, dancing, worthless tribe you are ;
Fit only for yourselves : you herd together ;

I. THE FAIR PENITENT.

Mr. 'Till well, Sir, you are pleasant—

Mr. By the joys

th my soul yet has uncontrol'd persw'd,

uld not turn aside from my least pleasure,

'all thy force were arm'd to bar my way ;

like the birds, great Nature's happy commoners,

haunt in woods, in meads, and flow'ry gardens,

the sweets and taste the choicest fruits,

corn to ask the lordly owner's leave.

Mr. What liberty has vain presumptuous youth,

thou should'st dare provoke me unchastis'd ?

henceforth, boy, I warn thee, shun my walks.

the bounds of yon forbidden place

in thou'rt found, expect a punishment,

h as great souls, impatient of an injury,

ed from those who wrong 'em much, ev'n death ;

omething worse: an injur'd husband's vengeance

print a thousand wounds, tear thy fair form,

scatter thee to all the winds of Heav'n. 320

my way in Genoa prescrib'd

the wretched Altamont,

brawls for him in taverns,

his valour's reputation ?

y speech is fouler than thy manners.

re be a name more vile, his parasite ;

ce !

arn humanity,

ffers to strike him, *ROSSANO interposes.*

ed boys are only taught with blows.

ration !

[*They draw.*

this goes no further here:

ch ; already

to

And when the circling glass warms your vain hearts,
You talk of beauties that you never saw,
And fancy raptures that you never knew.
“Legends of saints who never yet had being,
“Or being, ne’er were saints, are not so false
“As the fond tales which you recount of love.”

Loth. But that I do not hold it worth my leisure;
I could produce such damning proof——

Hor. ’Tis false!

You blast the fair with lies, because they scorn you,
Hate you like age, like ugliness and impotence: 280
Rather than make you blest, they would die virgins,
And stop the propagation of mankind.

Loth. It is the curse of fools to be secure,
And that be thine and Altamont’s. Dream on;
Nor think upon my vengeance till thou feel’st it.

Hor. Hold, Sir; another word, and then farewell:
Tho’ I think greatly of Calista’s virtue,
And hold it far beyond thy pow’r to hurt;
Yet, as she shares the honour of my Altamont,
That treasure of a soldier, bought with blood,
And kept at life’s expence, I must not have
(Mark me, young Sir) her very name profan’d.
Learn to restrain the licence of your speech;
’Tis held you are too lavish. When you are met
Among your set of fools, talk of your drefs,
Of dice, of whores, of horses and yourselves;
’Tis safer, and becomes your understandings.

Loth. What if we pass beyond this solemn order,
And, in defiance of the stern Horatio,
Indulge our gayer thoughts, let laughter loose, 300
And use his sacred friendship for our mirth?

Hor. 'Till well, Sir, you are pleasant——

Loth. By the joys
Which my soul yet has uncontrol'd pers'd,
I would not turn aside from my least pleasure,
Tho' all thy force were arm'd to bar my way;
But like the birds, great Nature's happy commoners,
That haunt in woods, in meads, and flow'ry gardens,
Rifle the sweets and taste the choicest fruits,
Yet scorn to ask the lordly owner's leave.

Hor. What liberty has vain presumptuous youth,
That thou should'st dare provoke me unchastis'd?
But henceforth, boy, I warn thee, shun my walks.
If in the bounds of yon forbidden place
Again thou'rt found, expect a punishment,
Such as great souls, impatient of an injury,
Exact from those who wrong 'em much, ev'n death;
Or something worse: an injur'd husband's vengeance
Shall print a thousand wounds, tear thy fair form,
And scatter thee to all the winds of Heav'n. 320

Loth. Is then my way in Genoa prescrib'd
By a dependant on the wretched Altamont,
A talking Sir, that brawls for him in taverns,
And vouches for his valour's reputation?

Hor. Away! thy speech is fouler than thy manners.

Loth. Or, if there be a name more vile, his parasite;
A beggar's parasite!

Hor. Now learn humanity,

[Offers to strike him, ROSSANO interposes.
Since brutes and boys are only taught with blows.

Loth. Damnation! [They draw.

Ros. Hold, this goes no further here.

Horatio, 'tis too much; already see
The crowd are gath'ring to us.

Loth. Oh, Roffano !

Or give me way, or thou'rt no more my friend.

Ros. Sciolto's servants, too, have ta'en th' alarm ;
You'll be oppress'd by numbers. Be advis'd,
Or I must force you hence. Tak't on my word,
You shall have justice done you on Horatio.
Put up, my lord. 340

Loth. This wo't brook delay ;
West of the town a mile, among the rocks,
Two hours ere noon, to-morrow, I expect thee,
Thy single hand to mine.

Hor. I'll meet thee there.

Loth. To-morrow, Oh, my better stars ! to-morrow
Exert your influence ; shine strongly for me ;
'Tis not a common conquest I would gain,
Since love as well as arms, must grace my triumph.

[*Exeunt* LOTHARIO and ROSSANO.]

Hor. Two hours ere noon to-morrow ! ha ! ere that
He sees Calista ! Oh, unthinking fool——
What if I urg'd her with the crime and danger ?
If any spark from Heav'n remain unquench'd
Within her breast, my breath perhaps may wake it.
Could I but prosper there, I would not doubt
My combat with that loud vain-glorious boaster.
Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom ye trust,
Did you but think how seldom fools are just,
So many of your sex would not in vain
Of broken vows, and faithless men, complain : 360
Of all the various wretches love has made,
How few have been by men of sense betray'd ?
Convinc'd by reason, they your pow'r confess,

Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,
And conscious of your worth can never love you less.

[*Exit.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in SCIOLTO's Palace. Enter SCIOLTO
and CALISTA.*

Sciolto.

Now, by my life, my honour, 'tis too much !
Have I not mark'd thee, wayward as thou art,
Perverse and fullen all this day of joy ?
When ev'ry heart was cheer'd and mirth went round,
Sorrow, displeasure, and repining anguish,
Sat on thy brow ; " like some malignant planet,
" Foe to the harvest and the healthy year,
" Who scowls adverse, and lours upon the world ;
" When all the other stars, with gentle aspect,
" Propitious shine, and meaning good to man. '

Cal. Is then the task of duty half perform'd ?
Has not your daughter giv'n herself to Altamont,
Yielded the native freedom of her will
To an imperious husband's lordly rule
To gratify a father's stern command ?

Sci. Dost thou complain ?

Cal. For pity do not frown then,
If in despite of all my vow'd obedience,
A sigh breaks out, or a tear falls by chance :

For, Oh! that sorrow which has drawn your anger,
Is the sad native of Calista's breast :

" And once possess'd, will never quit its dwelling,
" Till life, the prop of all, shall leave the building,
" To tumble down, and moulder into ruin."

Sci. Now by the sacred dust of that dear saint
That was thy mother ; " by her wond'rous goodness,
" Her soft, her tender, most complying sweetness,"
I swear, some sullen thought that shuns the light,
Lurks underneath that sadness in thy visage.
But mark me well, tho' by yon Heav'n I love thee
As much, I think, as a fond parent can ;
Yet should'st thou, (which the pow'rs above forbid)
E'er stain the honour of thy name with infamy,
I'll cast thee off, as one whose impious hands
Had rent asunder nature's nearest ties,
Which, once divided, never join again.
To-day I've made a noble youth thy husband !
Consider well his worth ; reward his love ;
Be willing to be happy, and thou art so.

[*Exit SCITOLTO.*

Cal. How hard is the condition of our sex, 46
Thro' ev'ry state of life the slaves of man !
In all the dear delightful days of youth
A rigid father dictates to our wills,
And deals out pleasure with a scanty hand.
To his, the tyrant husband's reign succeeds ;
Proud with opinion of superior reason,
He holds domestic bus'ness and devotion
All we are capable to know, and shuts us,
Like cloister'd idiots, from the world's acquaintance,
And all the joys of freedom. Wherefore are we

Born with high souls, but to assert ourselves,
Shake off this vile obedience they exact,
And claim an equal empire o'er the world?

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. She's here! yet, Oh! my tongue is at a loss.
Teach me, some pow'r, that happy art of speech,
To dress my purpose up in gracious words;
Such as may softly steal upon her soul,
And never waken the tempestuous passions.
By Heav'n she weeps! — Forgive me, fair Calista,
If I presume on privilege of friendship, 60
To join my grief to yours, and mourn the evils
That hurt your peace, and quench those eyes in tears.

Cal. To steal, unlook'd for, on my private sorrow,
Speaks not the man of honour, nor the friend,
But rather means the spy.

Hor. Unkindly said!

For, Oh! as sure as you accuse me falsely,
I come to prove myself Calista's friend.

Cal. You are my husband's friend, the friend of
Altamont!

Hor. Are you not one? Are you not join'd by
Heaven,

Each interwoven with the other's fate?
Are you not mixt like streams of meeting rivers,
Whose blended waters are no more distinguish'd,
But roll into the sea, one common flood?
Then who can give his friendship but to one?
Who can be Altamont's and not Calista's?

Cal. Force, and the wills of our imperious rulers,
May bind two bodies in one wretched chain ;
But minds will still look back to their own choice.

“ So the poor captive in a foreign realm, 80

“ Stands on the shore, and sends his wishes back

“ To the dear native land from whence he came.”

Hor. When souls that should agree to will the
same,

To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues :
Love shall be banish'd from the genial bed,
The night shall all be lonely and unquiet,
And ev'ry day shall be a day of cares.

Cal. Then all the boasted office of thy friendship,
Was but to tell Calista what a wretch she is.

Alas ! what needed that ?

Hor. Oh ! rather say,

I came to tell her how she might be happy ;
To sooth the secret anguish of her soul ;
To comfort that fair mourner, that forlorn one,
And teach her steps to know the paths of peace.

Cal. Say thou, to whom this paradise is known,
Where lies the blissful region ? Mark my way to it,
For, Oh ! 'tis sure I long to be at rest. 100

Hor. Then—to be good is to be happy—Angels
Are happier than mankind, because they're better.
Guilt is the source of sorrow ! 'tis the fiend,
Th' avenging fiend that follows us behind
With whips and stings. The blest know none of this,
But rest in everlasting peace of mind,
And find the height of all their heav'n is goodness.

Cal. And what bold parasite's officious tongue
Shall dare to tax Calista's name with guilt?

Hor. None should; but 'tis a busy, talking world,
That with licentious breath blows like the wind,
As freely on the palace as the cottage.

Cal. What mystic riddle lurks beneath thy words,
Which thou would'st seem unwilling to express,
As if it meant dishonour to my virtue?
Away with this ambiguous shuffling phrase,
And let thy oracle be understood.

Hor. Lothario!

Cal. Ha! what would'st thou mean by him?

Hor. Lothario and Calista! thus they join 120
Two names, which Heav'n decreed should never meet.
Hence have the talkers of this populous city
A shameful tale to tell, for public sport,
Of an unhappy beauty, a false fair one,
Who plighted to a noble youth her faith,
When she had giv'n her honour to a wretch.

Cal. Death and confusion! Have I liv'd to this?
Thus to be treated with unmanly insolence!
To be the sport of a loose ruffian's tongue!
Thus to be us'd! thus! like the vilest creature,
That ever was a slave to vice and infamy.

Hor. By honour and fair truth, you wrong me much;
For, on my soul, nothing but strong necessity
Could urge my tongue to this ungrateful office.
I came with strong reluctance, as if death
Had stood across my way, to save your honour,
Your's and Sciolto's, your's and Altamont's;
Like one who ventures through a burning pile;

To save his tender wife, with all her brood
Of little fondlings, from the dreadful ruin. 14

Cal. Is this the famous friend of Altamont,
For noble worth and deeds of arms renown'd?
Is this the tale-bearing officious fellow,
That watches for intelligence from eyes;
This wretched Argus of a jealous husband,
That fills his easy ears with monstrous tales,
And makes him tose, and rave, and weak at length
Bloody revenge on his defenceless wife,
Who guiltless dies, because her fool ran mad?

Hor. Alas! this rage is vain; for if your fame
Or peace be with your care, you must be calm,
And listen to the means are left to save 'em.
'Tis now the lucky minute of your fate.
By me your genius speaks, by me it warns you,
Never to see that curst Lothario more;
Unless you mean to be despis'd, be shunn'd
By all our virtuous maids and noble matrons;
Unless you have devoted this rare beauty
To infamy, diseases, prostitution—

Cal. Dishonour blast thee, base, unmanner'd slave!
That dar'st forget my birth, and sacred sex, 16
And shock me with the rude, unhallow'd sound!

Hor. Here kneel, and in the awful face of Heav'n
Breathe out a solemn vow, never to see,
Nor think, if possible, on him that ruin'd thee;
Or, by my Altamont's dear life, I swear,
This paper; nay, you must not fly—This paper,
[Holding her
This guilty paper shall divulge your shame—

Cal. What mean'st thou by that paper? What contrivance

Hast thou been forging to deceive my father;
To turn his heart his wretched daughter,
That Altamont and thou may share his wealth?
A wrong like this will make me ev'n forget
The weakness of my sex.—Oh, for a sword,
To urge my vengeance on the villain's hand
That forg'd the scroll!

Hor. Behold! Can this be forg'd?
See where Calista's name—— [*Shewing the letter near,*
To atoms thus, [*Tearing it.*
Thus let me tear the vile, detested falsehood, 180
The wicked, lying evidence of shame.

Hor. Confusion!

Cal. Henceforth, thou officious fool,
Meddle no more nor dare, ev'n on thy life,
To breathe an accent that may touch my virtue.
I am myself the guardian of my honour,
And will not bear so insolent a monitor.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Where is my life, my love, my charming bride,
Joy of my heart, and pleasure of my eyes,
“The wish, and care, and business of my youth?”
“Oh, let me find her, snatch her to my breast,
“And tell her the delays my bliss too long,
“Till my soft soul ev'n sickens with desire.”
Disorder'd!—and in tears!—Horatia too!
My friend is in amaze—What can it mean?
Tell me, Calista, who has done thee wrong,

That my swift sword may find out the offender,
And do thee ample justice.

Cal. Turn to him.

Alt. Horatio.

200

Cal. To that insolent.

Alt. My friend!

Could he do this? He, who was half myself?

“One faith has ever bound us, and one reason

“Guided our wills. Have I not found him just,

“Honest as truth itself? And” could he break

The sanctity of friendship? Could he wound

The heart of Altamont in his Calista?

Cal. I thought what justice I should find from thee!

Go fawn upon him, listen to his tale,

Applaud his malice, that would blast my fame,

And treat me like a common prostitute.

Thou art perhaps confederate in his mischief,

And wilt believe the legend, if he tells it.

Alt. Oh, impious! what presumptuous wretch shall
dare

To offer at an injury like that?

Priesthood, nor age, nor cowardice itself,

Shall save him from the fury of my vengeance.

Cal. The man who dar'd to do it was Horatio;

Thy darling friend; 'twas Altamont's Horatio. 220

But mark me well; while thy divided heart,

Doats on a villain that has wrong'd me thus,

No force shall drag me to thy hated bed.

Nor can my cruel father's pow'r do more

Than shut me in a cloister: there, well pleas'd,

Religious hardships will I learn to bear,

To fast and freeze at midnight hours of pray'r:

Nor think it hard, within a lonely cell,
With melancholy, speechless saints to dwell ;
But bless the day I to that refuge ran,
Free from the marriage chain, and from that tyrant,
man. [Exit Calista.

Alt. She's gone ; and, as she went, ten thousand
fires

Shot from her angry eyes ; as if she meant
Too well to keep the cruel vow she made.
Now, as thou art a man, Horatio, tell me,
What means this wild confusion in thy looks ;
As if thou wert at variance with thyself,
Madness and reason combating within thee,
And thou wert doubtful which should get the better ?

Hor. I would be dumb for ever ; but thy fate 240
Has otherwise decreed it. Thou hast seen
That idol of thy soul, that fair Calista
Thou hast beheld her tears.

Alt. I have seen her weep ;
I have seen that lovely one, that dear Calista,
Complaining, in the bitterness of sorrow,
That thou, my friend, Horatio, thou hast wrong'd
her.

Hor. That I have wrong'd her ! had her eyes been
fed

From that rich stream which warms her heart, and
number'd

For ev'ry falling tear a drop of blood,
It had not been too much ; for she has ruin'd thee,
Ev'n thee, my Altamont. She has undone thee.

Alt. Dost thou join ruin with Calista's name ?
What is so fair, so exquisitely good ?

Is she not more than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy when they love ?

“ Does she not come, like wisdom, or good fortune,
“ Replete with blessings, giving wealth and honour ?
“ The dowry which she brings is peace and pleasure,
“ And everlasting joys are in her arms.” 260

Hor. It had been better thou had'st liv'd a beggar,
And fed on scraps at great men's surly doors,
Than to have match'd with one so false, so fatal.—

Alt. It is too much for friendship to allow thee.
Because I tamely bore the wrong thou didst her,
Thou dost avow the barb'rous, brutal part,
And urge the injury ev'n to my face.

Hor. I see she has got possession of thy heart;
She has charm'd thee, like a siren, to her bed,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds :
Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
When thou art wreck'd upon the faithless shore,
Then vainly wish thou had'st not left thy friend,
To follow her delusion.

Alt. If thy friendship
Do churlishly deny my love a room,
It is not worth my keeping : I disclaim it.

Hor. Canst thou so soon forget what I've been to
thee ?

I shar'd the task of nature with thy father,
And form'd with care thy unexperienc'd youth 280
To virtue and to arms.

Thy noble father, Oh, thou light young man !
Wou'd he have us'd me thus ? One fortune fed us ;
For his was ever mine, mine his, and both
Together flourish'd, and together fell.

He call'd me friend, like thee : wou'd he have left
me

Thus, for a woman, and a vile one, too ?

Alt. Thou canst not, dar'st not mean it ! Speak
again,

Say, who is vile ; but dare not name Calista.

Hor. I had not spoke at first, unless compell'd,
And forc'd to clear myself ; but since thus urg'd,
I must avow, I do not know a viler.

Alt. Thou wert my father's friend ; he lov'd thee
well ;

" A kind of venerable mark of him

" Hangs round thee, and protects thee from my ven-
geance."

I cannot, dare not lift my sword against thee,
But henceforth never let me see thee more.

[*Going out.*

Hor. I love thee still, ungrateful as thou art,
And must and will preserve thee from dishonour,
Ev'n in despite of thee.

[*Holds him.*

Alt. Let go my arm.

301

Hor. If honour be thy care, if thou would'st live
Without the name of credulous, wittol husband,
Avoid thy bride, shun her detested bed,
The joys it yields are dash'd with poison——

Alt. Off !

To urge me but a minute more is fatal.

Hor. She is polluted, stain'd——

Alt. Madness and raging !

But hence——

Hor. Dishonour'd by the man you hate——

Alt. I pr'ythee loose me yet, for thy own sake,
If life be worth the keeping——

Hor. By Lothario.

Alt. Perdition take thee, villain, for the falsehood!
[*Strikes him.*

Now, nothing but thy life can make atonement.

Hor. A blow! thou hast us'd me well——[*Draws.*

Alt. This to thy heart——

Hor. Yet hold—By Heav'n his father's in his face!
Spite of my wrongs, my heart runs o'er with tender-
ness

321

And I could rather die myself than hurt him.

Alt. Defend thyself; for by my much wrong'd
love,

I swear, the poor evasion shall not save thee.

Hor. Yet hold——“thou know'st I dare—think how
we've liv'd——

[*They fight; Altamont presses on Horatio, who
retires.*

“Nay then, 'tis brutal violence; and thus,

“Thus Nature bids me guard the life she gave.

“[*They fight.*”

LAVINIA enters, and runs between their swords.

Lav. My brother, my Horatio! Is it possible!
Oh, turn your cruel swords upon Lavinia.
If you must quench your impious rage in blood,
Behold, my heart shall give you all her store,
To save those dearer streams that flow from yours.

Alt. 'Tis well thou hast found a safe-guard ; none
but this,

No pow'r on earth could save thee from my fury.

" Lav. O fatal, deadly sound !"

Hor. Safety from thee !

Away, vain boy ! Hast thou forgot the rev'rence
Due to my arm, thy first, thy great example,
Which pointed out thy way to noble daring,
And shew'd thee what it was to be a man ?

Lav. What busy, meddling fiend, what foe to goodness,
340

Could kindle such a discord ? " Oh, lay by

" Those most ungentle looks, and angry weapons,

" Unless you mean my griefs and killing fears

" Should stretch me out at your relentless feet,

" A wretched corse, the victim of your fury."

Hor. Ask'st thou what made us foes ? 'Twas base
ingratitude,

'Twas such a sin to friendship, as Heav'n's mercy,
That strives with man's untoward, monstrous wickedness,

Unwearied with forgiving, scarce could pardon.

He who was all to me, child, brother, friend,

With barb'rous, bloody malice, fought my life.

Alt. Thou art my sister, and I would not make
thee

The lonely mourner of a widow'd bed ;

Therefore, thy husband's life is safe : but warn him,

No more to know this hospitable roof.

He has but ill repaid Sciolto's bounty.

We must not meet ; 'tis dangerous. Farewel.

[He is going out, Lavinia holds him.]

Lav. Stay, Altamont, my brother, stay; "if ever
" Nature, or what is nearer much than nature,
" The kind consent of our agreeing minds, 360
" Have made us dear to one another, stay,
" And speak one gentle word to your Horatio.
" Behold, his anger melts, he longs to love you,
" To call you friend, then press you hard, with all
" The tender, speechless joy of reconciliation."

Alt. It cannot, shall not be—you must not hold
me.

Lav. Look kindly, then.

Alt. Each minute that I stay;
Is a new injury to fair Calista.
From thy false friendship, to her arms I'll fly;
" There, if in any pause of love I rest,
" Breathless with bliss, upon her panting breast,
" In broken, melting accents, I will swear,
" Henceforth to trust my heart with none but her ;"
Then own, the joys which on her charms attend,
Have more than paid me for my faithless friend.

[Altamont breaks from Lavinia, and exit.

Hor. Oh, raise thee, my Lavinia, from the earth.
It is too much ; this tide of flowing grief,
This wondrous waste of tears, too much to give
To an ungrateful friend, and cruel brother. 380

Lav. Is there not cause for weeping ? Oh, Ho-
ratio !

A brother and a husband were my treasure,
'Twas all the little wealth that poor Lavinia
Sav'd from the shipwreck of her father's fortunes.
One half is lost already. If thou leav'st me ;
If thou should'st prove unkind to me, as Altamont,

Whom shall I find to pity my distress,
To have compassion on a helpless wanderer,
And give her where to lay her wretched head ?

Hor. Why dost thou wound me with thy soft complainings ?

Tho' Altamont be false, and use me hardly,
Yet think not I impute his crimes to thee.
Talk not of being forsaken ; for I'll keep thee
Next to my heart, my certain pledge of happiness.

" Heav'n form'd thee gentle, fair, and full of goodness,

" And made thee all my portion here on earth :

" It gave thee to me, as a large amends

" For fortune, friends, and all the world beside."

Lav. Then you will love me still, cherish me
ever,

And hide me from misfortune in your bosom. 400

" Here end my cares, nor will I lose one thought,

" How we shall live, or purchase food and raiment.

" The holy Pow'r, who cloaths the senseless earth,

" With woods, with fruits, with flow'rs, and verdant
grasses,

" Whose bounteous hand feeds the whole brute crea-
tion,

" Knows all our wants, and has enough to give us."

Hor. From Genoa, from falsehood and inconstancy,
To some more honest, distant clime we'll go.

Nor will I be beholden to my country,

For aught but thee, the partner of my flight.

" *Lav.* Yes, I will follow thee ; forsake, for thee,

" My country, brother, friends, ev'n all I have.

" Tho' mine's a little all ; yet were it more,

- " And better far, it should be left for thee,
" And all that I would keep, should be Horatio.
" So, when a merchant sees his vessel lost,
" Tho' richly freighted from a foreign coast,
" Gladly, for life, the treasure he would give ;
" And only wishes to escape, and live :
" Gold, and his gains, no more employ his mind ;
" But, driving o'er the billows with the wind, 421
" Cleaves to one faithful plank, and leaves the rest be-
hind. [Exeunt,
-

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Garden. Enter ALTAMONT.

Altamont.

- " WITH what unequal tempers are we form'd ?
" One day the soul, supine with ease and fulness,
" Revels secure, and fondly tells herself
" The hour of evil can return no more ;
" The next, the spirits, pall'd and sick of riot,
" Turn all to discord, and we hate our beings,
" Curse the past joy, and think it folly all,
" And bitterness and anguish. Oh, last night !
" What has ungrateful beauty paid me back,
" For all the mafs of friendship which I squander'd ?
" Coldness, averfion, tears, and fullen sorrow,
" Dash'd all my blifs, and damp'd my bridal bed.

" Soon as the morning dawn'd, she vanish'd from
me,

" Relentless to the gentle call of love.

" I've lost a friend, and I have gain'd—a wife !

" Turn not to thought, my brain ; but let me find

" Some unfrequented shade ; there lay me down,

" And let forgetful dulness steal upon me,

" To soften and assuage this pain of thinking.

[*Exit.*

LOTHARIO and CALISTA discovered.

Loth. Weep not, my fair ; but let the God of
Love

Laugh in thy eyes, and revel in thy heart,

Kindle again his torch, and hold it high,

To light us to new joys. Nor let a thought

Of discord, or disquiet past, molest thee ;

But to a long oblivion give thy cares,

And let us melt the present hour in blifs.

Cal. Seek not to sooth me with thy false endear-
ments,

To charm me with thy softness : 'tis in vain :

Thou can'st no more betray, nor I be ruin'd.

The hours of folly, and of fond delight,

Are wasted all, and fled ; those that remain

Are doom'd to weeping, anguish, and repentance.

I come to charge thee with a long account,

Of all the sorrows I have known already,

And all I have to come ; thou hast undone me.

Loth. Unjust Calista ! dost thou call it ruin,
To love as we have done ; to melt, to languish,

"To wish for somewhat exquisitely happy,
 And then be blest ev'n to that wish's height?
 To die with joy, and straight to live again; 40
 Speechless to gaze, and with tumultuous transport—

Cal. Oh, let me hear no more; I cannot bear it;
 'Tis deadly to remembrance. Let that night,
 That guilty night, be blotted from the year;
 "Let not the voice of mirth or music know it;
 "Let it be dark and desolate; no stars
 "To glitter o'er it; let it wish for light,
 "Yet want it still, and vainly wait the dawn;"
 For 'twas the night that gave me up to shame,
 To sorrow, to the false Lothario.

Loth. Hear this, ye pow'rs! mark, how the fair de-
 ceiver
 Sadly complains of violated truth;
 She calls me false, ev'n she, the faithless she,
 Whom day and night, whom heav'n and earth have
 heard
 Sighing to vow, and tenderly protest,
 Ten thousand times, she would be only mine;
 And yet, behold, she has given herself away,
 Fled from my arms, and wedded to another,
 Ev'n to the man whom most I hate on earth.—

Cal. Art thou so base to upbraid me with a crime,
 Which nothing but thy cruelty could cause? 61
 If indignation raging in my soul,
 For thy unmanly insolence and scorn,
 Urg'd me to a deed of desperation,
 And wound thyself to be reveng'd on thee,
 Think whom I should devote to death and hell,
 Whom curse as my undoer, but Lothario;

Hadst thou been just, not all Sciolto's pow'r,
Not all the vows and pray'rs of fighting Altamont,
Could have prevail'd, or won me to forsake thee.

Loth. How have I fail'd in justice, or in love?
Burns not my flame as brightly as at first?
Ev'n now my heart beats high, I languish for thee,
My transports are as fierce, as strong my wishes,
As if thou ne'er hadst blest me with thy beauty.

Cal. How didst thou dare to think that I would
live

A slave to base desires, and brutal pleasures,
To be a wretched wanton for thy leisure,
To toy, and waste an hour of idle time with?
My soul disdains thee for so mean a thought. 80

Loth. The driving storm of passion will have way,
And I must yield before it. Wert thou calm,
Love, the poor criminal, whom thou hast doom'd,
Has yet a thousand tender things to plead,
To charm thy rage, and mitigate his fate.

Enter behind them ALTAMONT.

Alt. "I have lost my peace"—Ha! do I live and
wake?

Cal. Hadst thou been true, how happy had I been!
Not Altamont, but thou, hadst been my lord.
But wherefore nam'd I happiness with thee?
It is for thee, for thee, that I am curst;
For thee my secret soul each hour arraigns me,
Calls me to answer for my virtue stain'd,
My honour lost to thee: for thee it haunts me;

With stern Sciolto vowing vengeance on me :

With Altamont complaining for his wrongs——

Alt. Behold him here—— [*Coming forward.*

Cal. Ah ! [*Starting.*

Alt. The wretch ! whom thou hast made.

Curfes and sorrows hast thou heap'd upon him, 99

And vengeance is the only good that's left. [*Drawing.*

Loth. Thou hast ta'en me somewhat unawares, 'tis true :

But love and war take turns, like day and night,

And little preparation serves my turn,

Equal to both, and arm'd for either field.

We've long been foes, this moment ends our quarrel ;

Earth, Heav'n, and fair Calista judge the combat !

Cal. Distraction ! Fury ! Sorrow ! Shame ! and death !

“ *Alt.* Thou hast talk'd too much, thy breath is poison to me ;

“ It taints the ambient air ; this for my father,

“ This for Sciolto, and this last for Altamont.”

[*They fight ; Lothario is wounded once or twice, and then falls.*

Loth. Oh, Altamont ! thy genius is the stronger !

Thou hast prevail'd !—My fierce ambitious soul

Declining droops, and all her fires grow pale ;

Yet let not this advantage swell thy pride,

I conquer'd in my turn, in love I triumph'd.

Those joys are lodg'd beyond the reach of fate ;

That sweet revenge comes smiling to my thoughts,

Adorns my fall, and cheers my heart in dying.

[*Dies.*

Cal. And what remains for me, beset with shame,
Encompas'd round with wretchedness? There is
But this one way to break the toil, and 'scape. 121

*[She catches up Lothario's sword, and offers to
kill herself; Altamont runs to her, and wrests
it from her.]*

Alt. What means thy frantic rage!

Cal. Off! let me go.

Alt. Oh! thou hast more than murder'd me; yet
still,

Still art thou here! and my soul starts with horror,
At thought of any danger that may reach thee.

Cal. Think'st thou I mean to live? to be forgiv'n?
Oh, thou hast known but little of Calista!
If thou had'st never heard my shame, if only
The midnight moon and silent stars had seen it,
I would not bear to be reproach'd by them,
But dig down deep to find a grave beneath,
And hide me from their beams.

Sciolto within.] What, ho! my son!

"*Alt.* It is Sciolto calls; come near and find me;
"The wretched'st thing of all my kind on earth."

Cal. Is it the voice of thunder, or my father?
Madness! Confusion! let the storm come on,
Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me;
Dash my devoted bark, ye surges, break it! 140
'Tis for my ruin that the tempest rises.

When I am lost, sunk to the bottom low,
Peace shall return, and all be calm again.

Enter Sciolto.

Sci. Ev'n now Rossano leap'd the garden wall——

Ha ! Death has been among you—Oh, my fears !

Last night thou had'st a diff'rence with thy friend,

The cause thou gav'st me was a damn'd one.

Did'st thou not wrong the man who told thee truth ?

Answer me quick——

Alt. Oh ! prefs me not to speak ;

Ev'n now my heart is breaking, and the mention

Will lay me dead before you. See that body,

And guesfs my shame : my ruin ! Oh, Calista !

Sci. It is enough ! but I am slow to execute,

And justice lingers in my lazy hand ;

Thus let me wipe dishonour from my name,

And cut thee from the earth, thou stain to goodness——

[Offers to kill Calista, Altamont holds him.]

Alt. Stay thee, Sciolto, thou rash father, stay,

Or turn the point on me, and through my breast

Cut out the bloody passage to Calista :

160

So shall my love be perfect, while for her

I die, for whom alone I wish'd to live.

Cal. No, Altamont ; my heart that scorn'd thy
love,

Shall never be indebted to thy pity.

Thus torn, defac'd, and wretched as I seem,

Still I have something of Sciolto's virtue.

Yes, yes, my father, I applaud thy justice ;

Strike home, and I will blefs thee for the blow :

Be merciful, and free me from my pain ;

'Tis sharp, 'tis terrible, and I could curse
The cheerful day, men, earth, and heav'n, and thee,
Ev'n thee, thou venerable good old man,
For being author of a wretch like me.

Alb. Listen not to the wildness of her raving ;
Remember nature ! Should thy daughter's murder
Defile that hand, so just, so great in arms,
Her blood would rest upon thee to posterity,
Pollute thy name, and fully all thy wars.

Cal. Have I not wrong'd his gentle nature much ?
And yet behold him pleading for my life ! 180
Lost as thou art to virtue, Oh, Calista !
I think thou can'st not bear to be outdone ;
Then haste to die, and be oblig'd no more.

Sci. Thy pious care has giv'n me time to think,
And sav'd me from a crime ; then rest, my sword ;
To honour have I kept thee ever sacred,
Nor will I stain thee with a rash revenge.
But mark me well, I will have justice done ;
Hope not to bear away thy crimes unpunished :
I will see justice executed on thee,
Ev'n to a Roman strictness ; and thou, nature,
Or whatsoe'er thou art that plead'st within me,
Be still ; thy tender strugglings are in vain.

Cal. Then am I doom'd to live, and bear your
triumph ?
To groan beneath your scorn and fierce upbraiding,
Daily to be reproach'd, and have my misery
At morn, at noon, at night told over to me,
“ Left my remembrance might grow pitiful,
“ And grant a moment's interval of peace ;”

Is this, is this the mercy of a father ? ZOC

I only beg to die, and he denies me.

Sci. Hence, from my sight ! thy father cannot bear thee ;

Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,
Where, on the confines of eternal night,
Mourning, misfortune, cares, and anguish dwell ;
Where ugly shame hides her opprobrious head,
And death and hell detested rule maintain ;
There howl out the remainder of thy life,
And wish thy name may be no more remember'd.

Cal. Yes, I will fly to some such dismal place,
And be more curs'd than you can wish I were ;
This fatal form that drew on my undoing,
Fasting, and tears, and hardship shall destroy ;
Nor light, nor food, nor comfort will I know,
Nor ought that may continue hated life.
Then, when you see me meagre, wan, and chang'd,
Stretch'd at my length, and dying in my cave,
On that cold earth I mean shall be my grave,
Perhaps you may relent, and sighing say,
At length her tears have wash'd her stains away ;
At length 'tis time her punishment should cease ;
Die, thou poor suff'ring wretch, and be at peace.

[*Exit Calista.*]

Sci. Who of my servants wait there ?

Enter two or three Servants.

Raise that body, and bear it in. On your lives
Take care my doors be guarded well, that none
Pass out, or enter, but by my appointment.

[*Exeunt Servants, with Lothario's body.*]

Alt. There is a fatal fury in your visage,
It blazes fierce, and menaces destruction.

"My father, I am sick of many sorrows,

"Ev'n now my easy heart is breaking with 'em ;

"Yet, above all, one fear distracts me most ;"

I tremble at the vengeance which you meditate

On the poor, faithless, lovely, dear Calista.

Sci. Hast thou not read what brave Virginus did?

With his own hand he slew his only daughter,

To save her from the fierce Decemvir's lust.

He slew her, yet unspotted, to prevent

The shame which she might know. Then what should

I do ?

But thou hast ty'd my hand.—I wo' not kill her ;

Yet, by the ruin she has brought upon us, 240

The common infamy that brands us both,

She shall not 'scape.

Alt. You mean that she shall die then ?

Sci. Ask me not what, nor how I have resolv'd,

For all within is anarchy and uproar.

Oh, Altamont ! What a vast scheme of joy

Has this one day destroy'd ? Well did I hope

This daughter would have blest my latter days ;

That I should live to see you the world's wonder,

So happy, great, and good that none were like you.

While I, from busy life and care set free,

Had spent the evening of my age at home,

Among a little prattling race of yours :

There, like an old man, talk'd a-while, and then

Laid down and slept in peace. Instead of this,

Sorrow and shame must bring me to my grave——

"Oh, damn her ! damn her !"

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Arm yourself, my lord :
Rossano, who but now escap'd the garden,
Has gather'd in the street a band of rioters, 260
Who threaten you and all your friends with ruin,
Unless Lothario be return'd in safety. [*Exit.*

Sci. By Heav'n, their fury rises to my wish,
Nor shall misfortune know my house alone,
But thou, Lothario, and thy race shall pay me
For all the sorrows which my age is curs'd with.
I think my name as great, my friends as potent,
As any in the state ; all shall be summon'd ;
I know that all will join their hands to ours,
And vindicate thy vengeance. When our force
Is full, and arm'd, we shall expect thy sword
To join with us, and sacrifice to justice.—

[*Exit Sciolto.*

“ *Alt.* There is a stupid weight upon my senses ;
“ A dismal fullen stillness, that succeeds
“ The storm of rage and grief, like silent death,
“ After the tumult and the noise of life.
“ Would it were death, as sure 'tis wond'rous like it,
“ For I am sick of living ; my soul's pall'd,
“ She kindles not with anger or revenge :
“ Love was th' informing, active fire within : 280
“ Now that is quench'd, the mass forgets to move,
“ And longs to mingle with its kindred earth.”

[*A tumultuous noise, with clashing of swords,
as at a little distance.*

Enter LAVINIA, with two Servants, their swords drawn.

Lav. Fly, swiftly fly ; to my Horatio's aid,
Nor lose your vain officious cares on me ;
Bring me my lord, my husband, to my arms ;
He is Lavinia's life ; bring him me safe,
And I shall be at ease, be well and happy.

[Exeunt Servants.]

Alt. Art thou Lavinia ? Oh ! what barb'rous hand
Could wrong thy poor defenceless innocence,
And leave such marks of more than savage fury ?

Lav. My brother ! Oh, my heart is full of fears ;
Perhaps ev'n now my dear Horatio bleeds.—
Not far from hence, as passing to the port,
By a mad multitude we were surrounded,
Who ran upon us with uplifted swords,
And cry'd aloud for vengeance, and Lothario.
My lord, with ready boldness, stood the shock,
To shelter me from danger ; but in vain,
Had not a party from Sciolto's palace
Rush'd out, and snatch'd me from amidst the fray.

Alt. What of my friend ?

301

Lav. Ha ! by my joys, 'tis he ! *[Looking out.]*
He lives, he comes to bless me, he is safe !——

Enter HORATIO, with two or three Servants, their swords drawn.

1st Ser. 'Twere at the utmost hazard of your life
To venture forth again, till we are stronger :
Their number trebles ours.

Hor. No matter, let it ;
Death is not half so shocking as that traitor.
My honest soul is mad with indignation,
To think her plainness could be so abus'd,
As to mistake that wretch, and call him friend ;
I cannot bear the sight.

Alt. Open, thou earth,
Gape wide, and take me down to thy dark bosom,
To hide me from Horatio.

Hor. Oh, Lavinia !
Believe not but I joy to see thee safe :
Would our ill-fortune had not drove us hither :
I could ev'n wish we rather had been wreck'd
On any other shore, than sav'd on this. 320

Lav. Oh, let us bless the mercy that preserv'd us,
That gracious pow'r that sav'd us for each other :
And, to adorn the sacrifice of praise,
Offer forgiveness too ; be thou like Heav'n,
And put away th' offences of thy friend,
Far, far from thy remembrance.

“ *Alt.* I have mark'd him,
“ To see if one forgiving glance stole hither ;
“ If any spark of friendship were alive,
“ That would by sympathy at meeting glow,
“ And strive to kindle up the flame a-new ;
“ 'Tis lost, 'tis gone ; his soul is quite estrang'd,
“ And knows me for its counterpart no more.

“ *Hor.* Thou know'st thy rule, thy empire in Ho-
ratio ;
“ Nor canst thou ask in vain, command in vain,
“ Where nature, reason, nay, where love is judge ;

“ But when you urge my temper to comply

“ With what it most abhors, I cannot do it.

“ *Lav.* Where didst thou get this fullen gloomy hate ?

“ It was not in thy nature to be thus ; 340

“ Come, put it off, and let thy heart be cheerful,

“ Be gay again, and know the joys of friendship,

“ The trust, security, and mutual tendernefs,

“ The double joys, where each is glad for both ;

“ Friendship, the wealth, the last retreat and strength,

“ Secure against ill fortune, and the world.”

Hor. I am not apt to take a light offence.

But patient of the failings of my friends,

And willing to forgive ; but when an injury

Stabs to the heart, and rouses my resentment,

(Perhaps it is the fault of my rude nature)

I own, I cannot easily forgive it.

Alt. Thou hast forgot me.

Hor. No.

Alt. Why are thy eyes

Impatient of me then, scornful, and fierce ?

Hor. Because they speak the meaning of my heart ;

Because they're honest, and disdain a villain.

Alt. I've wrong'd thee much, Horatio.

Hor. True, thou hast. 360

When I forget it, may I be a wretch,

Vile as thyself, a false perfidious fellow,

An infamous, believing, British husband.

Alt. I've wrong'd thee much, and Heav'n has well aveng'd it.

I have not, since we parted, been at peace,

Nor known one joy sincere ; “ our broken friend-
ship

“ Pursued me to the last retreat of love,

“ Stood glaring like a ghost, and made me cold with
horror.

“ Misfortunes on misfortunes press upon me,

“ Swell o’er my head like waves, and dash me down ;

“ Sorrow, remorse, and shame, have torn my soul ;

“ They hang, like winter, on my youthful hopes,

“ And blast the spring and promise of my year.”

Lav. “ So flow’rs are gather’d to adorn a grave,

“ To lose their freshness amongst bones and rot-
tenness,

“ And have their odours stifled in the dust.”

Canst thou hear this, thou cruel, hard Horatio ?

Canst thou behold thy Altamont undone ?

“ That gentle, that dear youth ! canst thou behold
him,”

His poor heart broken, death in his pale visage, 380

And groaning out his woes, yet stand unmov’d ?

Hor. The brave and wise I pity in misfortune ;

But when ingratitude and folly suffers,

’Tis weakness to be touch’d.

Alt. I wo’not ask thee

To pity or forgive me ; but confess,

This scorn, this insolence of hate, is just ;

’Tis constancy of mind, and manly in thee.

But, Oh ! had I been wrong’d by thee, Horatio,

There is a yielding softness in my heart

Cou’d ne’er have stood it out ; but I had ran,

With streaming eyes, and open arms, upon thee,

And press’d thee close, close !

Hor. I must hear no more,
Thy weakness is contagious ; I shall catch it,
And be a tame, fond wretch.

Lav. Where would'st thou go ?
Would'st thou part thus ? you shall not, 'tis impos-
sible ;

For I will bar thy passage, kneeling thus
Perhaps thy cruel hand may spurn me off, 400
But I will throw my body in thy way,
And thou shalt trample o'er my faithful bosom,
Tread on me, wound me, kill me, ere thou pass.

Alt. Urge not in vain thy pious suit, Lavinia,
I have enough to rid me of my pain.
Calista, thou hadst reach'd my heart before ;
To make all sure, my friend repeats the blow :
But in the grave our cares shall be forgotten,
There love and friendship cease. [*Falls.*

[*Lavinia runs to him, and endeavours to raise him.*

"Lav. Speak to me, Altamont.

"He faints! he dies! Now, turn and see thy triumph!

"My brother! But our cares shall end together ;

"Here will I lay me down by thy dear side,

"Bemoan thy too hard fate, then share it with thee,

"And never see my cruel lord again."

[*Horatio runs to Altamont, and raises him in his arms.*

Hor. It is too much to bear! Look up, my Alta-
mont!

My stubborn, unrelenting heart has kill'd him.

"Look up and bless me ; tell me that thou liv'st.

"Oh! I have urg'd thy gentleness too far ;

[*He revives.*

“ Do thou and my Lavinia both forgive me; 420
A flood of tenderness comes o’er my soul;
I cannot speak—I love, forgive, and pity thee—

Alt. I thought that nothing cou’d have stay’d my
soul;

That long ere this her flight had reach’d the stars;
But thy known voice has lur’d her back again.
Methinks, I fain wou’d set all right with thee,
Make up this most unlucky breach, and then,
With thine and Heaven’s forgiveness on my soul,
Shrink to my grave, and be at ease for ever.

Hor. By heav’n, my heart bleeds for thee; e’n this
moment,

I feel thy pangs of disappointed love.

“ Is it not pity that this youth should fall,

“ That all his wond’rous goodness should be lost,

“ And the world never know it? Oh, my Altamont!”

Give me thy sorrows, let me bear ’em for thee,
And shelter thee from ruin.

Lav. Oh, my brother,

Think not but we will share in all thy woes;

We’ll sit all day, and tell sad tales of love:

And when we light upon some faithless woman, 440

Some beauty, like Calista, false and fair,

We’ll fix our grief, and our complaining there;

We’ll curse the nymph that drew the ruin on,

And mourn the youth that was, like thee, undone.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Room hung with Black ; on one side Lothario's Body on a Bier ; on the other a Table, with a Scull and other Bones, a book and a Lamp on it.

Calista is discovered on a Couch, in Black ; her Hair hanging loose and disordered. After soft Music, she rises and comes forward.

“ SONG.

“ *HEAR, you midnight phantoms, hear,*
“ *You who pale and wan appear,*
“ *And fill the wretch who wakes with fear ;*
“ *You, who wander, scream and groan*
“ *Round the mansions once your own ;*
“ *You, who still your crimes upbraid ;*
“ *You who rest not with the dead ;*
“ *From the coverts where you stray,*
“ *Where you lurk and shun the day,*
“ *From the charnel and the tomb,*
“ *Hither haste ye, hither come.*

" *Chide Calista for delay,*
 " *Tell her, 'tis for her you stay ;*
 " *Bid her die and come away.*
 " *See the sexton with his spade,*
 " *See the grave already made ;*
 " *Listen, fair one, to thy knell,*
 " *This music is thy passing bell."*

Cal. 'Tis well ! these solemn sounds, this pomp of horror,

Are fit to feed the frenzy in my soul. 20

Here's room for meditation ev'n to madness ;
 Till the mind burst with thinking. 'This dull flame
 Sleeps in the socket.' Sure the book was left
 To tell me something ;—for instruction then—
 He teaches holy sorrow and contrition,
 And penitence.—Is it become an art, then ?
 A trick that lazy, dull, luxurious gownmen
 Can teach us to do over ? I'll no more on't ;

[Throwing away the book.]

I have more real anguish in my heart,
 Than all their pedant discipline e'er knew.
 What charnel has been rifled for these bones ?
 Fie ! this is pageantry ;—they look uncouthly,
 But what of that, if he or she that own'd 'em
 Safe from disquiet sit, and smile to see
 The farce their miserable reliëts play ?
 But here's a sight is terrible indeed !
 Is this that haughty, gallant, gay, Lothario,
 That dear perfidious—Ah !—how pale he looks !
 How grim with clotted blood, and those dead eyes !
 Ascend, ye ghosts, fantastic forms of night, 40

In all your diff'rent dreadful shapes ascend,
And match the present horror, if you can.

Enter SCIOLTO.

Sci. This dead of night, this silent hour of darkness,
Nature for rest ordain'd, and soft repose ;
And yet distraction, and tumultuous jars,
Keep all our frightened citizens awake :
" The senate, weak, divided, and irresolute,
" Want pow'r to succour the afflicted state.
" Vainly in words and long debates they're wise,
" While the fierce factions scorn their peaceful orders,
" And drown the voice of law in noise and anarchy."
Amidst the general wreck, see where she stands,

[*Pointing to Calista.*

Like Helen, in the night when Troy was sack'd,
Spectatress of the mischief which she made.

Cal. It is Sciolto ! Be thyself, my soul ;
Be strong to bear his fatal indignation,
That he may see thou art not lost so far,
But somewhat still of his great spirit lives
In the forlorn Calista.

Sci. Thou wert once
My daughter.

66

Cal. Happy were it I had dy'd,
And never lost that name.

Sci. That's something yet ;
Thou wert the very darling of my age :

I thought the day too short to gaze upon thee,
 That all the blessings I could gather for thee,
 By cares on earth, and by my pray'rs to Heav'n,
 Were little for my fondness to bestow ;
 Why didst thou turn to folly, then, and curse me?

Cal. Because my soul was rudely drawn from
 yours ;

A poor imperfect copy of my father,
 " Where goodness, and the strength of manly virtue,
 " Was thinly planted, and the idle void
 " Fill'd up with light belief, and easy fondness ;"
 It was, because I lov'd, and was a woman.

Sci. Hadst thou been honest, thou hadst been a
 cherubim ;

But of that joy, as of a gem long lost,
 Beyond redemption gone, think we no more.
 Hast thou e'er dar'd to meditate on death ?

80

Cal. I have, as on the end of shame and sorrow.

Sci. Ha ! answer me ! Say, hast thou coolly
 thought ?

'Tis not the stoick's lessons got by rote,
 The pomp of words, and pedant dissertations,
 That can sustain thee in that hour of terror ;
 Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it,
 But when the trial comes, they stand aghast ;
 Hast thou consider'd what may happen after it ?
 How thy account may stand, and what to answer ?

Cal. I've turn'd my eyes inward upon myself,
 Where foul offence and shame have laid all waste ;
 Therefore my soul abhors the wretched dwelling,
 And longs to find some better place of rest.

Sci. 'Tis justly thought, and worthy of that spirit
That dwelt in ancient Latian breasts, when Rome
Was mistress of the world. I would go on,
And tell thee all my purpose ; but it sticks
Here at my heart, and cannot find a way.

Cal. Then spare the telling, if it be a pain,
And write the meaning with your poignard here. 100.

Sci. Oh ! truly guess'd—see'st thou, this trembling
hand— [Holding up a dagger.
Thrice justice urg'd—and thrice the slack'ning sinews
Forgot their office, and confess'd the father.
At length the stubborn virtue has prevail'd,
It must, it must be so—Oh ! take it then,

[Giving the dagger.

And know the rest untaught.

Cal. I understand you.

It is but thus, and both are satisfy'd.

[She offers to kill herself : Sciolto catches hold
of her arm.

Sci. A moment, give me yet a moment's space.
The stern, the rigid judge has been obey'd ;
Now nature, and the father, claim their turns.
I've held the balance with an iron hand,
And put off ev'ry tender human thought,
To doom my child to death ; but spare my eyes
The most unnatural sight, lest their strings crack,
My old brain split, and I grow mad with horror.

Cal. Ha ! is it possible ; and is there yet
Some little dear remain of love and tenderness
For poor, undone Calista, in your heart ?

Sci. Oh ! when I think what pleasure I took in
thee,

What joys thou gav'st me in thy prattling infancy,
 Thy sprightly wit, and early blooming beauty ;
 How have I stood, and fed my eyes upon thee,
 Then, lifting up my hands, and wond'ring, blest thee ;
 By my strong grief, my heart ev'n melts within me ;
 I could curse Nature, and that tyrant, honour,
 For making me thy father, and thy judge ;
 Thou art my daughter still.

Cal. For that kind word,
 Thus let me fall, thus humbly to the earth,
 Weep on your feet, and bless you for this goodness.
 Oh ! 'tis too much for this offending wretch,
 This parricide, that murders with her crimes,
 Shortens her father's age, and cuts him off,
 Ere little more than half his years be number'd.

Sci. Would it were otherwise—but thou must die.—

Cal. That I must die, it is my only comfort ;
 Death is the privilege of human nature,
 And life without it were not worth our taking :
 " Thither the poor, the pris'ner, and the mourner, 140
 " Fly for relief, and lay their burthens down."
 Come then, and take me into thy cold arms,
 Thou meagre shade ; here let me breathe my last,
 Charm'd with my father's pity and forgiveness,
 More than if angels tun'd their golden viols,
 And sung a requiem to my parting soul.

Sci. I'm summon'd hence ; ere this my friends expect me.

There is I know not what of sad presage,
 That tells me, I shall never see thee more ;
 If it be so, this is our last farewell,

And these the parting pangs, which nature feels,
When anguish rends the heart-strings—Oh, my
daughter! [*Exit Sciolto.*]

Cal. Now think, thou curst Calista, now behold
The desolation, horror, blood, and ruin,
Thy crimes and fatal folly spread around,
That loudly cry for vengeance on thy head ;
Yet Heav'n, who knows our weak, imperfect natures,
How blind with passions, and how prone to evil,
Makes not too strict inquiry for offences,
But is aton'd by penitence and pray'r : 160
Cheap recompence ! here 'twould not be receiv'd,
Nothing but blood can make the expiation,
And cleanse the soul from inbred, deep pollution.
And see, another injur'd wretch is come,
To call for justice from thy tardy hand.

Enter ALTAMONT.

Alt. Hail to you, horrors ! hail, thou house of
death !

And thou, the lovely mistress of these shades,
Whose beauty gilds the more than midnight darkness,
And makes it grateful as the dawn of day.
Oh, take me in, a fellow-mourner, with thee,
I'll number groan for groan, and tear for tear ;
And when the fountain of thy eyes are dry,
Mine shall supply the stream, and weep for both.

Cal. I know thee well, thou art the injur'd Altamont ;
Thou com'st to urge me with the wrongs I've done
thee ;

But know, I stand upon the brink of life,

And in a moment mean to set me free
From shame and thy upbraiding.

Alt. Falsely, falsely

Dost thou accuse me ! When did I complain, 180
Or murmur at my fate ? " For thee I have
" Forgot the temper of Italian husbands,
" And fondness has prevail'd upon revenge."
I bore my load of infamy with patience,
" As holy men do punishment from Heav'n ;"
Nor thought it hard, because it came from thee.
Oh, then, forbid me not to mourn thy loss,
To wish some better fate had rul'd our loves,
And that Calista had been mine, and true.

Cal. Oh, Altamont ! 'tis hard for souls like mine,
Haughty and fierce, to yield they've done amiss.
But, Oh, behold ! my proud disdainful heart
Bends to thy gentler virtue. Yes, I own,
Such is thy truth, thy tenderness, and love ;
" Such are the graces that adorn thy youth,"
That, were I not abandon'd to destruction,
With thee I might have liv'd for ages blest'd,
And dy'd in peace within thy faithful arms.

Alt. Then happiness is still within our reach.
Here let remembrance lose our past misfortunes, 200
Tear all records that hold the fatal story ;
Here let our joys begin, from hence go on,
In long successive order.

Cal. What ! in death ?

Alt. Then, art thou fix'd to die ?——But be it so ;
We'll go together ; my advent'rous love
Shall follow thee " to those uncertain beings.

"Whether our lifeless shades are doom'd to wander
 "In gloomy groves, with discontented ghosts ;
 "Or whether thro' the upper air we fleet,
 "And tread the fields of light; still I'll pursue thee,"
 'Till fate ordains that we shall part no more.

Cal. Oh, no ! Heav'n has some other better lot in
 store

To crown thee with. Live, and be happy long ;
 Live, for some maid that shall deserve thy goodness,
 Some kind, unpractis'd heart, that never yet
 Has listen'd to the false ones of thy sex,
 Nor known the arts of ours ; she shall reward thee,
 Meet thee with virtues equal to thy own,
 Charm thee with sweetness, beauty, and with truth ;
 Be blest in thee alone, and thou in her. 221

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Now, mourn indeed, ye miserable pair ;
 For now the measure of your woes is full.

Alt. What dost thou mean, Horatio ?

Hor. Oh, 'tis dreadful !

The great, the good Sciolto dies this moment.

Cal. My father !

Alt. That's a deadly stroke, indeed.

Hor. Not long ago he privately went forth,
 Attended but by few, and those unbidden.
 I heard which way he took, and straight pursu'd him ;
 But found him compass'd by Lothario's faction,
 Almost alone, amidst a crowd of foes.
 Too late we brought him aid, and drove them back ;

Ere that, his frantic valour had provok'd
The death he seem'd to wish for from their swords.

Cal. And dost thou bear me yet, thou patient
• earth?

Dost thou not labour with thy murd'rous weight?
And you, ye glitt'ring, heav'nly host of stars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or I shall blast you;
For I am all contagion, death, and ruin, 241
And nature sickens at me. Rest, thou world,
This parricide shall be thy plague no more;
Thus, thus I set thee free. [*Stabs herself.*]

Hor. Oh, fatal rashness!

Alt. Thou dost instruct me well. To lengthen life,
Is but to trifle now.

[*Altamont offers to kill himself; Horatio prevents him, and wrests his sword from him.*]

Hor. Ha! what means

The frantic Altamont? Some foe to man
Has breath'd on ev'ry breast contagious fury,
And epidemic madness.

Enter SCIOLTO, pale and bloody, supported by servants.

Cal. Oh, my heart!

Well may'st thou fail; for see, the spring that fed
Thy vital stream is wasted, and runs low.
My father! will you now, at last, forgive me,
If, after all my crimes, and all your suff'rings,
I call you once again by that dear name?
Will you forget my shame, and those wide wounds?
Lift up your hand, and bless me, ere I go
Down to my dark abode?

Sci. Alas, my daughter !
 Thou hast rashly ventur'd in a stormy sea,
 Where life, fame, virtue, all were wreck'd and lost.
 But sure thou hast borne thy part in all the anguish,
 And smarted with the pain. Then, rest in peace :
 Let silence and oblivion hide thy name,
 And save thee from the malice of posterity ;
 And may'st thou ~~find~~ with Heav'n the same forgive-
 nefs,

As with thy father here.——Die, and be happy.

Cal. Celestial sounds ! Peace dawns upon my soul,
 And ev'ry pain grows less—Oh, gentle Altamont !
 Think not too hardly of me when I'm gone ;
 But pity me——Had I but early known
 Thy wond'rous worth, thou excellent young man,
 We had been happier both——Now, 'tis too late ;
 And yet my eyes take pleasure to behold thee ;
 Thou art their last dear object——Mercy, Heav'n !

[*She dies.*]

Alt. Cold ! dead, and cold ! and yet thou art not
 chang'd,

But lovely still. Hadst thou a thousand faults,
 What heart so hard, what virtue so severe, 280
 But at that beauty must of force relented,
 Melted to pity, love, and to forgiveness ?

Sci. Oh, turn thee from that fatal object, Alta-
 mont,

Come near, and let me bless thee, ere I die.
 To thee, and brave Horatio, I bequeath
 My fortunes——Lay me by thy noble father,
 And love my memory, as thou hast his ;
 For thou hast been my son—Oh, gracious Heav'n !

Thou that hast endless blessings still in store
For virtue, and for filial piety,
Let grief, disgrace, and want be far away ;
But multiply thy mercies on his head.
Let honour, greatness, goodness, still be with him,
And peace in all his ways—— [*He dies.*

Alt. Take, take it all :

To thee, Horatio, I resign the gift,
While I pursue my father, and my love,
And find my only portion in the grave.

Hor. The storm of grief bears hard upon his youth,
And bends him, like a drooping flower to earth. 300
By such examples are we taught to prove
The sorrows that attend unlawful love.
Death, or some worse misfortune, soon divide,
The injur'd bridegroom from his guilty bride.
If you would have the nuptial union last,
Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

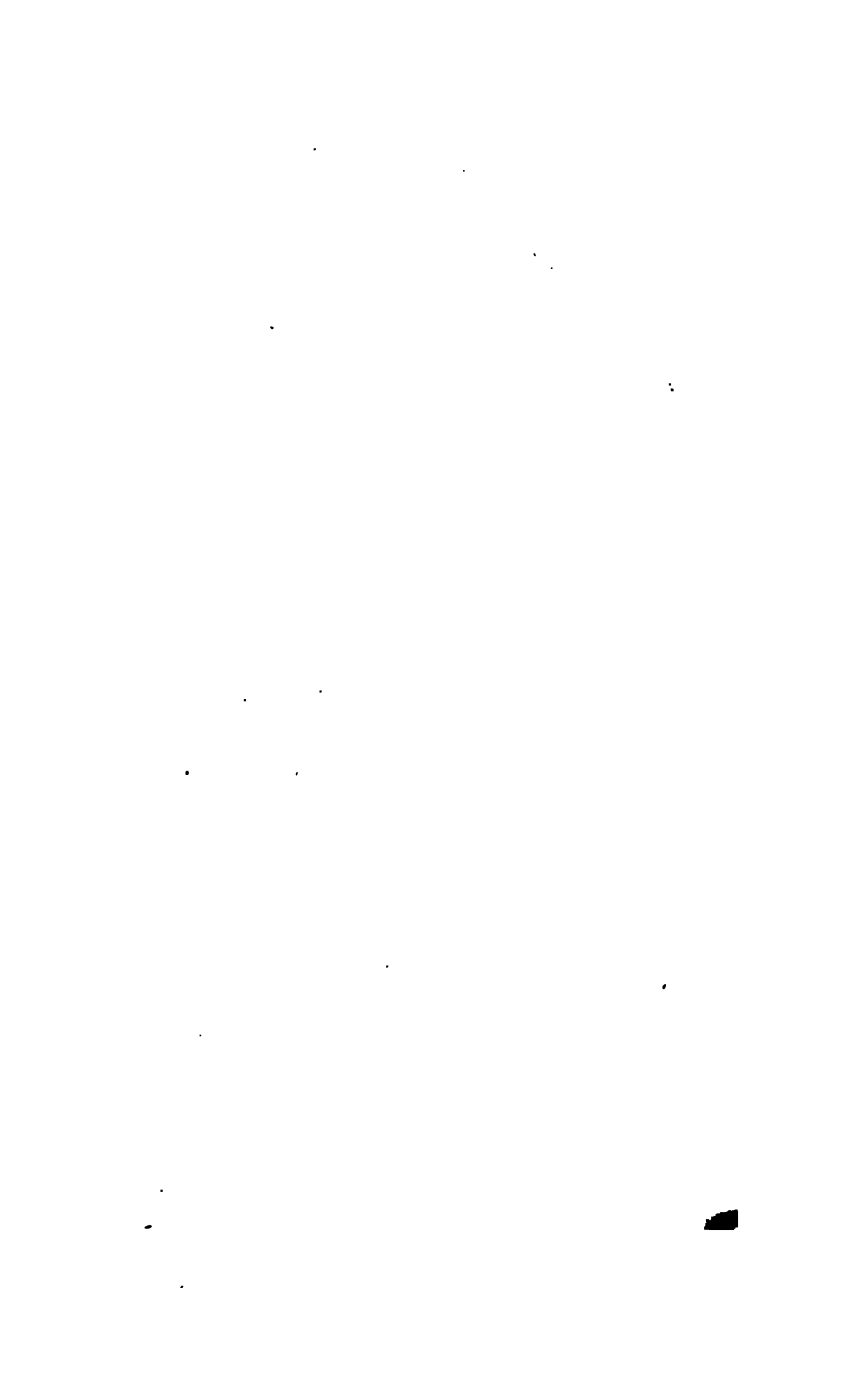
*YOU see the tripping dame could find no favour,
Dearly she paid for breach of good behaviour ;
Nor could her loving husband's fondness save her.
Italian ladies lead but scurvy lives,
There's dreadful dealings with eloping wives :
Thus 'tis, because these husbands are obey'd
By force of laws, which for themselves they made.
With tales of old prescriptions, they confine
The right of marriage-rules to their male line,
And buff, and domineer by right divine.
Had we the pow'r, we'd make the tyrants know,
What 'tis to fail in duties which they owe ;
We'd teach the saunt'ring squire, who loves to roam,
Forgetful of his own dear spouse at home ;
Who snores, at night, supinely by her side ;
'Twas not for this the nuptial knot was ty'd.
The plodding petty-fogger, and the cit,
Have learn'd, at least, this modern way of wit.
Each ill-bred, senseless rogue, tho' ne'er so dull,
Has th' impudence to think his wife a fool ;
He spends the night, where merry wags resort,
With joking clubs, and eighteen-penny port ;
While she, poor soul, 's contented to regale,
By a sad sea-coal fire, with wigs and ale.
Well may the cuckold-making tribe find grace,
And fill an absent husband's empty place.*

EPILOGUE.

*If you wou'd e'er bring constancy in fashion,
You men must first begin the reformation.
Then shall the golden age of love return,
No turtle for her wand'ring mate shall mourn ;
No foreign charms shall cause domestic strife,
But every married man shall toast his wife ;
Phillis shall not be to the country sent,
For carnivals in town to keep a tedious Lent ;
Lampoons shall cease, and envious scandal die,
And all shall live in peace, like my good man and I.*







MOURNING BRIDE.

Act I.



De Witte ad. v. p. 178.

M. E. F. 1841.

M^r POPE as ZARA.

*but when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself.*

London Published by W. Jones St. 86, Dame Street.

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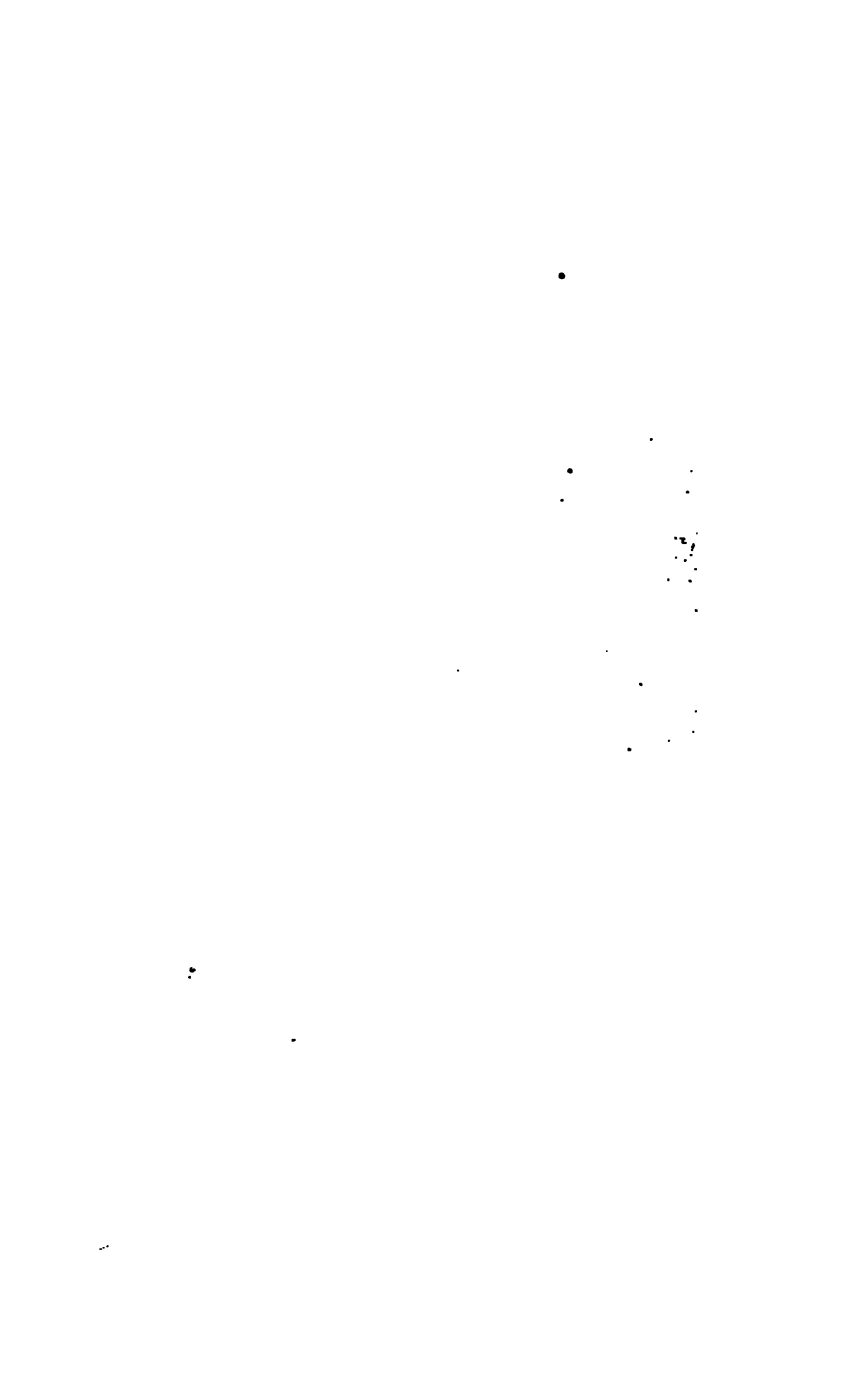
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1714

1714

London: Printed by J. G. Smith, 22, St. James Street.



THE
MOURNING BRIDE.

A
TRAGEDY.

WILLIAM
BY MR. CONGREVE.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

“ The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.”

DUBLIN :

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL,
FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCI.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS,
THE PRINCESS.

MADAM,

THAT high station, which, by your birth, you hold above the people, exacts from every one, as a duty, whatever honours they are capable of paying to your Royal Highness; but that more exalted place to which your virtues have raised you, above the rest of princes, makes the tribute of our admiration and praise rather a choice, more immediately preventing that duty. The public gratitude is ever founded on a public benefit; and what is universally blessed is always an universal blessing. Thus, from yourself we derive the offerings which we bring; and that incense which arises to your name, only returns to its original, and but naturally requires the parent of its being.

From hence it is, that this Poem, constituted on a moral, whose end it is to recommend, and to encourage virtue, of consequence, has recourse to your Royal Highness's patronage; aspiring to cast itself beneath your feet, and declining approbation, 'till you shall condescend to own it, and vouchsafe to shine upon it, as on a creature of your influence.

It is from the example of princes, that virtue becomes a fashion in the people; for even they who are averse to instruction, will yet be fond of imitation.

THE MOURNING BRIDE.

THIS splendid error of a man of genius has been popular among such as either knew not, or did not feel, the chaster ornaments of composition—but gave to extravagance of sentiment and improbability of situation what is due only to propriety and nature.

As the language and the sentiments of this tragedy exemplify very forcibly every fault in dramatic composition, it may not be disserviceable to Letters to extend the brevity of our mentions for this article.

CONGREVE's imagination was naturally vivid, luxuriant, and rapid.—He heaps up, when the *impetus* is upon him, an accumulation of glitter and gawd, extravagant and mistimed.—For passion his common substitute is splendor; yet so unequal are his powers, that he has frequently scenes of alternate inanity and bombast—of creeping imbecility and soaring extravagance.

OF his use of unmeaning *expletive*, take the following sample:—

Almeria. But I *did* promise I would tell thee—What?
My miseries? Thou *doest* already know them;
And, when I told thee thou *didst* nothing know,
It was because thou *didst* not know Alphonso.

Surely this is NOTHING.

Of the *inane* take the following delectable dose :

Osmyn. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love—
But as I may, I'll do.

This reminds us of Corporal *Nym* and ancient *Pistol*—
one of which tatterdemalions says—

I cannot tell,
Things must be as *they may*.

Of *miserable* extravagance, and misplaced metaphors
read this rant :

Osmyn. What brightness breaks upon me thus thro' shades,
And promises a day to this dark dwelling ?

A Prince imprisoned is not thus superlative in expression.—Observe also the lady is veiled.

The grand model for tender intercourse, the exact
etiquette of dress, and colloquial communicativeness,
here follows, extracted from a scene between Almeria
and Leonora :

Leon. Husband ! O Heav'ns !

Alm. Alas ! what have I said ?

My grief has hurried me beyond all thought.

I would have kept that secret ; though I know

Thy love and faith to me deserve all confidence.

The reason why she would conceal it, is extremely
curious.

But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
Some small reserve of *near* and inward woe,
Some unexpected hoard of darling grief,

Which *THEY* (who are *they*?) unseen may wail, and weep,
and mourn,
And, glutton-like, *alone* devour.

Leon. Indeed!

I knew not this.

Alm. O no, thou know'st not *half*,

Know'st *nothing* of my sorrows—if thou did'st—

If I should tell thee, wouldst thou pity me?

Tell me: I know thou wouldst, thou art compassionate.

Leon. Witness these tears——

Alm. I thank thee, &c.

- But it is necessary we should remark, *ALL* is not like these *notitia*—the Play has sentiments, now and then, that are natural, and description that both Feeling and Fancy may delight in—but it excites no interest—the personages are out of *drawing*—the modest outline of nature is bloated by extravagance, and ornamented by an injudicious fancy with jewels that glitter only in the sooty ear of an *Ethiop*.

PROLOGUE.

*The time has been when plays were not so plenty,
And a less number, new, would well content ye.
New plays did then like almanacks appear,
And one was thought sufficient for a year :
Though they are more like almanacks of late ;
For in one year, I think, they're out of date.
Nor were they, without reason, join'd together ;
For just as one prognosticates the weather,
How plentiful the crop, or scarce the grain,
What peals of thunder, or what showers of rain ;
So I other can foretel, by certain rules,
What crops of coxcombs, or what floods of fools.
In such like prophecies were poets skill'd,
Which now they find in their own tribe fulfill'd.
The dearth of wit they did so long presage,
Is fallen on us, and almost starves the stage.
Were you not griev'd, as often as you saw
Poor actors thresh such empty sheafs of straw ?
Toiling and lab'ring at their lungs' expence,
To start a jest, or force a little sense ?
Hard fate for us, still harder in th' event :
Our authors sin, but we alone repent.
Still they proceed, and, at our charge, write worse ;
'Twere some amends, if they could reimburse ;
But there's the devil, tho' their cause is lost,
There's no recovering damages or cost.*

*Good wits, forgive this liberty we take,
Since custom gives the losers leave to speak.
But if, provok'd, your dreadful wrath remains,
Take your revenge upon the coming scenes :
For that damn'd poet's spar'd, who damns a brother
As one thief 'scapes that executes another.
Thus far alone does to the wits relate ;
But from the rest we hope a better fate.
To please, and move, has been our poet's theme,
Art may direct, but nature is his aim ;
And nature mis'd, in vain he boasts his art,
For only nature can affect the heart.
Then freely judge the scenes that shall ensue ;
But as with freedom, judge with candour too.
He would not lose, thro' prejudice his cause ;
Nor would obtain, precariously, applause.
Impartial censure he requests from all,
Prepar'd by just decrees to stand or fall.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

MANUEL, <i>the king of Granada</i>	-	Mr. Aickin.
GONSALEZ, <i>his favourite</i>	- -	Mr. Packer.
GARCIA, <i>son to Gonzalez</i>	-	Mr. Barrymore.
PEREZ, <i>captain of the guards</i>	- -	Mr. Wilfon.
ALONZO, <i>an officer, creature to Gonzalez</i>	-	Mr. Phillimore.
OSMYN, <i>a noble prisoner</i>	- -	Mr. Kemble.
HELI, <i>a prisoner, his friend</i>	-	Mr. Benson.
SELIM, <i>an eunuch,</i>	- - -	Mr. Fawcett.

Women.

ALMERIA, <i>the princess of Granada</i>	-	Mrs. Ward.
ZARA, <i>a captive queen</i>	-	Mrs. Siddons.
LEONORA, <i>chief attendant on the princess</i>	-	Miss Tidswell.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

MANUEL, <i>the king of Granada</i>	-	Mr. Hull.
GONSALEZ, <i>his favourite</i>	- -	Mr. Gardner.
GARCIA, <i>son to Gonzalez</i>	- -	Mr. Powell.
PEREZ, <i>captain of the guards</i>	-	Mr. Thompson.
ALONZO, <i>an officer, creature to Gonzalez</i>	-	Mr. Fearon.
OSMYN, <i>a noble prisoner</i>	- -	Mr. Holman.
HELI, <i>a prisoner, his friend</i>	-	Mr. Cubit.
SELIM, <i>an eunuch</i>	- -	Mr. Macready.

Women.

ALMERIA, <i>the princess of Granada</i>	-	Miss Brunton.
ZARA, <i>a captive queen</i>	- -	Mrs. Pope.
LEONORA, <i>chief attendant on the princess</i>	-	Mrs. Platt.

Women, eunuchs, and mutes attending Zara, guards, &c.

SCENE, Granada.

THE
MOURNING BRIDE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A room of state. The curtain rising slowly to soft music, discovers ALMERIA in mourning, LEONORA waiting in mourning.

After the music, ALMERIA rises from her chair, and comes forward.

Almeria.

MUSIC has charms to sooth a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd,
And, as with living souls, have been inform'd
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I ? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint ? O, force of constant woe !
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace ; last night
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king ;

He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
 Within its cold, but hospitable, bosom.
 Why am not I at peace ?

Leon. Dear Madam, cease,

Or moderate your grief ; there is no cause——

Alm. No cause ! Peace, peace ; there is eternal
 cause,

And misery eternal will succeed.

Thou canst not tell—thou hast indeed no cause.

Leon. Believe me, Madam, I lament Anselmo,
 And always did compassionate his fortune ; 20
 Have often wept, to see how cruelly
 Your father kept in chains his fellow-king :
 And oft, at night, when all have been retir'd,
 Have stol'n from bed, and to his prison crept ;
 Where, while his gaoler slept, I thro' the grate
 Have softly whisper'd, and enquir'd his health ;
 Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliv'rance ;
 For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Alm. Indeed thou hast a soft and gentle nature ;
 That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
 Oh, Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo
 How wou'd thy heart have bled to see his sufferings !
 Thou hadst no cause, but general compassion.

Leon. Love of my royal mistress gave me cause ;
 My love of you begot my grief for him ;
 For I had heard, that when the chance of war
 Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
 And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
 The glory of the whole, were made the prey
 Of his success ; " that then, in spite of hate, 40
 " Revenge, and that hereditary feud

“ Between Valentia’s and Granada’s kings,”
 He did endear himself to your affection,
 By all the worthy and indulgent ways
 His most industrious goodness could invent ;
 Proposing, by a match between Alphonso
 His son, the brave Valentian prince, and you,
 To end the long dissention, and unite
 The jarring crowns.

“ *Alm.* Alphonso ! O, Alphonso !

“ Thou too art quiet—long hast been at peace—
 “ Both, both—father and son are now no more.
 “ Then why am I? Oh, when shall I have rest ?
 “ Why do I live to say you are no more ?
 “ Why are all these things thus ?—Is it of force ?
 “ Is there necessity I must be miserable ?
 “ Is it of moment to the peace of Heav’n,
 “ That I should be afflicted thus ?—If not,
 “ Why is it thus contriv’d ? Why are things laid
 “ By some unseen hand, so, as of sure consequence,
 “ They must to me bring curses, grief of heart,
 “ The last distress of life, and sure despair ? 62
 “ *Leon.* Alas ! you search too far, and think too
 deeply.”

Alm. Why was I carried to Anselmo’s court ?
 Or there, why was I us’d so tenderly ?
 Why not ill-treated, like an enemy ?
 For so my father would have us’d his child.
 Oh, Alphonso, Alphonso !
 Devouring seas have wash’d thee from my sight.
 No time shall raze thee from my memory ;
 No, I will live to be thy monument :
 The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb :

But in my heart thou art interr'd ; there, there,
Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd ;
My love, my lord, my husband still, tho' lost.

Leon. Husband ! Oh, Heav'ns !

Alm. Alas ! what have I said ?

My grief has hurry'd me beyond all thought.
I would have kept that secret ; though I know
Thy love, and faith to me deserve all confidence. 80

“ But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
“ Some small reserve of near and inward woe,
“ Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,
“ Which they unseen may wail, and weep, and mourn,
“ And, glutton-like, alone devour.

Leon. Indeed,

“ I knew not this.

“ *Alm.* Oh, no, thou know'st not half,
“ Know'st nothing of my sorrows—if thou didst—
“ If I should tell thee, would'st thou pity me ?
“ Tell me ; I know thou would'st ; thou art com-
passionate.”

Leon. Witness these tears——

“ *Alm.* I thank thee, Leonora——

“ Indeed I do, for pitying thy sad mistress :
“ For 'tis, alas ! the poor prerogative
“ Of greatness to be wretched, and unpitied——
“ But I did promise I would tell thee—What ?
“ My miseries ! Thou dost already know 'em :
“ And when I told thee thou didst nothing know,
“ It was because thou didst not know Alphonse : 100
“ For to have known my loss, thou must have known
“ His worth, his truth, and tenderness of love.”

Leon. The memory of that brave prince stands fair

In all report—

And I have heard imperfectly his loss ;
But, fearful to renew your troubles past,
I never did presume to ask the story.

Alm. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell thee.

I was a welcome captive in Valentia,
E'en on the day when Manuel, my father,
Led on his conqu'ring troops high as the gates
Of king Anselmo's palace ; which, in rage,
And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.
The good king, flying to avoid the flames,
Started amidst his foes, and made captivity
His fatal refuge—Would that I had fall'n
Amidst those flames—but 'twas not so decreed.
Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,
Had borne the queen and me on board a ship
Ready to sail ; and when this news was brought 120
We put to sea ; but being betray'd by some
Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,
And almost taken ; when a sudden storm
Drove us, and those that follow'd, on the coast
Of Afric : There our vessel struck the shore
And bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces ;
But Heav'n spar'd me for yet much more affliction !
Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun
The shore, and save me floating on the waves,
While the good queen and my Alphonso perish'd.

Leon. Alas ! were you then wedded to Alphonso ?

Alm. That day, that fatal day, our hands were
join'd.

For when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,
And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,
He came to me, and begg'd me by my love,
I would consent the priest should make us one ;
That whether death or victory ensu'd
I might be his, beyond the power of fate ;
The queen too did assist his suit—I granted ;
And in one day was wedded and a widow. 140

Leon. Indeed 'twas mournful——

Alm. 'Twas as I have told thee——
For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn ;
Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,
Or ever dry these swollen and watery eyes ;
Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,
While I have life, and thought of my Alphonso.

“ *Leon.* Look down, good Heav'n, with pity on
her sorrows,

“ And grant that time may bring her some relief.

“ *Alm.* Oh, no ! time gives increase to my afflictions.

“ The circling hours, that gather all the woes
“ Which are diffus'd thro' the revolving year,
“ Come heavy laden with th' oppressing weight
“ To me ; with me, successively, they leave
“ The sighs, the tears, the groans, the restless cares,
“ And all the damp of grief, that did retard their flight :
“ They shake their downy wings, and scatter all
“ The dire collected dews on my poor head :
“ Then fly with joy and swiftness from me.”

[*Shouts at a distance.*

Leon. Hark !

160

"The distant shouts proclaim your father's triumph.
O cease, for Heaven's sake, assuage a little
This torrent of your grief, for, this I fear,
'Twill urge his wrath, to see you drown'd in tears,
When joy appears in every other face.

Alm. And joy he brings to ev'ry other heart,
But double, double weight of woe to mine :
For with him Garcia comes—Garcia, to whom
I must be sacrific'd, and all the vows
I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.
No, it shall never be ; for I will die
First, die ten thousand deaths—Look down, look
down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make ; [*Kneels.*

" One moment, cease to gaze on perfect bliss,
" And bend thy glorious eyes to earth and me."

And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv'd
Thro' all impediments of purging fire,
To that bright Heav'n, where my Alphonso reigns,
Behold thou also, and attend my vow.

If ever I do yield, or give consent, 180

By any action, word, or thought, to wed
Another lord ; may then just Heav'n show'r down
Unheard of curses on me, greater far

(If such there be in angry Heaven's vengeance)
Than any I have yet endur'd—And now [*Rising.*

My heart has some relief ; having so well
Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.
Yet, one thing more I wou'd engage from thee.

Leon. My heart, my life, and will, are only
yours.

Alm. I thank thee. 'Tis but this : anon, when all
Are wrapp'd and buſied in the gen'ral joy,
Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me
Steal forth, to viſit good Anſelmo's tomb.

Leon. Alas ! I fear ſome fatal reſolution.

Alm. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no ill,
Nor violence—I feel myſelf more light,
And more at large, ſince I have made this vow.
Perhaps I would repeat it there more ſolemnly.
'Tis that, or ſome ſuch melancholy thought,
Upon my word, no more.

200

Leon. I will attend you.

Enter ALONZO.

Alm. The lord Gonſalez comes to tell your high-
neſs

The king is juſt arriv'd.

Alm. Conduſt him in.

[*Exit Alon.*

That's his pretence ; his errand is, I know,
To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds ;
And gild and magnify his ſon's exploits.
But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,
Not to be warm'd with words, or idle eloquence.

Enter GONSALEZ.

Gon. Be ev'ry day of your long life like this.
The ſun, bright conqueſt, and your brighter eyes,
Have all conſpir'd to blaze promiſcuous light,
And bleſs this day with moſt unequal'd luſtre.

Your royal father, my victorious lord,
 Loaden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,
 Is ent'ring now, in martial pomp, the palace.
 Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,
 Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish wealth.
 Chariots of war, adorn'd with glitt'ring gems,
 Succeed ; and next, a hundred neighing steeds, 220
 White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,
 That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,
 As they disdain'd the victory they grace.
 Prisoners of war in shining fetters follow :
 And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
 Sweat by his chariot wheel, " and lick and grind,
 " With gnashing teeth, the dust his triumphs raise."
 The swarming populace spread every wall,
 " And cling, as if with claws they did enforce
 " Their hold ; thro' clifted stones stretching and
 staring,
 " As if they were all eyes, and every limb
 " Would feed its faculty of admiration :"
 While you alone retire, and shun this sight ;
 This sight, which is indeed not seen (tho' twice
 The multitude should gaze) in absence of your eyes.

Alm. My lord, my eyes ungratefully behold
 The gilded trophies of exterior honours.
 Nor will my ears be charm'd with sounding words,
 Or pompous phrase, the pageantry of souls.
 But that my father is return'd in safety, 240
 I bend to Heav'n with thanks.

Gon. Excellent princess !
 But 'tis a task unfit for my weak age
 With dying words to offer at your praise.

Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowliest slave,
Has better done ; in proving with his sword
The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Alm. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's deeds,
Which had been brave, though I had ne'er been
born.

Leon. Madam, the king. [*Flourish.*]

" *Alm.* My women. I wou'd meet him."

[*Attendants to Almeria enter in mourning.*]

Symphony of warlike music. Enter the KING, attended by GARCIA and several officers. Files of prisoners in chains, and guards, who are ranged in order round the stage. ALMERIA meets the KING, and kneels : afterwards GONSALEZ kneels and kisses the KING's hand, while GARCIA does the same to the princess.

King. Almeria, rise—My best Gonfalez, rise.
What, tears ! my good old friend—

Gon. But tears of joy.
Believe me, Sir, to see you thus, has fill'd
Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By Heav'n, thou lov'st me, and I'm pleas'd
thou dost ;
Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice
To see thee weep on this occasion—Some
Here are, who seem to mourn at our success ! 260
Why is't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes,
Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds ?
In opposition to my brightness, you
And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Alm. Forgive me, Sir, if I in this offend.
The year, which I have vow'd to pay to Heav'n,
In mourning and strict life, for my deliv'rance
From wreck and death, wants yet to be expir'd.

King. Your zeal to Heav'n is great, so is your
debt :

Yet something too is due to me, who gave
That life, which Heav'n preserv'd. A day bestow'd
In filial duty, had aton'd and giv'n
A dispensation to your vow—No more !
'Twas weak and wilful—and a woman's error.
Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
To see that sable worn upon the day,
Succeeding that, in which our deadliest foe,
Hated Anselmo, was interr'd—by Heav'n,
It looks as thou didst mourn for him : just so
Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date, 280
Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd,
But that wherein the curs'd Alphonso perish'd.
Ha ! What ? thou dost not weep to think of that !

Gon. Have patience, royal Sir ? the princess weeps
To have offended you. If fate decreed,
One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss,
And her deliverance, is she to blame ?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have
feasted

When my first foe was laid in earth, such enmity,
Such detestation bears my blood to his ;
My daughter should have revell'd at his death,
She should have made these palace walls to shake,
And all this high and ample roof to ring
With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and weep !

Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve ! by
Heav'n,

There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
But should have smil'd that hour, through all his
care,

And shook his chains in transport and rude harmony.

Gon. What she has done, was in excess of goodness ;

Betray'd by too much piety, to seem 300
As if she had offended——Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjuncture.
I wo't not have a seeming sorrow seen
To-day.—Retire ; divest yourself with speed
Of that offensive black ; on me be all
The violation of your vow ; for you
It shall be your excuse, that I command it.

Gar. [*Kneeling.*] Your pardon, Sir, if I presume
so far,

As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia—I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.

Alm. My boding heart !—What is your pleasure,
Sir ?

King. Draw near, and give your hand, and, Garcia,
yours :

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found
Worthy to be your husband, and my son.

Gar. Thus let me kneel to take—O not to take—
But to devote, and yield myself for ever
The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gon. O let me prostrate pay my worthless thanks—

King. No more ; my promise long since pass'd,
thy services,

And Garcia's well-try'd valour, all oblige me. 320

This day we triumph ; but to-morrow's fun,

Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials——

Alm. Oh ! [*Faints.*

Gar. She faints ! help to support her.

" *Gon.* She recovers."

King. " A fit of bridal fear." How is't, Almeria ?

Alm. A sudden chillness seizes on my spirits.

Your leave, Sir, to retire.

King. Garcia, conduct her.

[*Garcia leads Almeria to the door, and returns.*

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears,

" I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,

" And make it sin, not to renounce that vow

" Which I'd have broken." Now, what would

Alonzo ?

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is arriv'd,

And with a train as if she still were wife

To Albucacim, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended.

" Bear hence these prisoners." Garcia, which is he,

Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders ?

[*Prisoners led off.*

Gar. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse ; but he,

Great Sir, at her request, attends on Zara. 341

King. He is your prisoner ; as you please dispose him.

Gar. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness ;

And with a haughty mien, and stern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers. If he speak,
'Tis scarce above a word ; as he were born
Alone to do, and did disdain to talk ;
At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such fullness, and in a man so brave,
Must have some other cause than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, request he might attend her ?

Gar. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd ; perhaps
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

*Enter ALONZO, ZARA, and OSMYN bound, conducted
by PEREZ and a guard, and attended by SELIM and
several mutes and eunuchs in a train.*

King. What welcome, and what honours, beautiful Zara,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours.
A conqueror indeed, where you are won ;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes, 359
That had your pomp been with your presence grac'd,
Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd ; and seen
The monarch enter not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led ; your beauty's slave.

Zar. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors in courtesy bestow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule

And native right to arbitrary sway,
 I might be pleas'd, when I behold this train
 With usual homage wait : but when I feel
 These bonds, I look with loathing on myself,
 And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
 Beneath mock-praises, and dissembled state.

King. Those bonds ! 'Twas my command you
 should be free.

How durst you, Perez, disobey ?

Perez. Great Sir,
 Your order was she should not wait your triumph ;
 But at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false ; 'twas more ; I bid she should be
 free ;

If not in words, I bid it by my eyes. 380
 Her eyes did more than bid——Free her and hers
 With speed——yet stay——my hands alone can make
 Fit restitution here——Thus I release you,
 And by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zar. Such favours, so conferr'd, tho' when un-
 fought ;

Deserve acknowledgment from noble minds.
 Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd——
 Yet hating more ingratitude, can pay,
 I offer.

King. Born to excel, and to command !
 As by transcendent beauty to attract
 All eyes, so by pre-eminence of soul
 To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who with contracted brow,
 [*Beholding Osmyn as they unbind him.*]

And fullen port, glooms downwards with his eyes ;
At once regardless of his chains, or liberty ?

Gar. That, Sir, is he of whom I spoke ; that's
Osmyn.

King. He answers well the character you gave him.
Whence comes it, valiant Osmyn, that a man
So great in arms, as thou art said to be, 400
So hardly can endure captivity,
The common chance of war ?

Osm. Because captivity

Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osm. I would not have you.

Zar. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd ; and the regret,
Of not revenging on his foes that loss,
Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him ; 'tis as I suspected.

[To Gonf.]

Gon. That friend might be herself ; seem not to
heed

His arrogant reply : she looks concern'd.

King. I'll have enquiry made ; perhaps his friend
Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name ?

Zar. Heli.

King. Garcia, that search shall be your care :
It shall be mine to pay devotion here ;
At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down,
And raise love's altar on the spoils of war. 420
Conquest and triumph, now, are mine no more ;
Nor will I victory in camps adore :

" For, ling'ring there, in long suspense she stands,
 " Shifting the prize in unresolving hands ;
 " Unus'd to wait, I broke through her delay,
 " Fix'd her by force, and snatch'd the doubtful day.
 " Now late I find that war is but her sport ;
 " In love the goddess keeps her awful court ;"
 Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,
 But rules with settled sway in Zara's eyes. [Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Representing the Aisle of a Temple. " GARCIA, HELI,
PEREZ.

" Garcia.

" THIS way we're told, Osmyn was seen to walk ;
 " Choosing this lonely mansion of the dead,
 " To mourn, brave Heli, thy mistaken fate.
 " Heli. Let Heav'n with thunder to the centre
 strike me,
 " If to arise in very deed from death,
 " And to revisit, with my long-clos'd eyes,
 " This living light, could to my soul or sense
 " Afford a thought, or shew a glimpse of joy,
 " In least proportion to the vast delight
 " I feel, to hear of Osmyn's name ; to hear
 " That Osmyn lives, and I again shall see him.

" *Garcia*. I've heard, with admiration, of your friendship.

" *Per*. Yonder, my lord, behold the noble Moor.

" *Hel*. Where? Where?

" *Gar*. I saw him not, nor any like him——

" *Per*. I saw him when I spoke, thwarting my view,

" And striding with distemper'd haste; his eyes

" Seem'd flame, and flash'd upon me with a glance;

" Then forward shot their fires which he pursu'd,

" As to some object frightful, yet not fear'd. 20

" *Gar*. Let's haste to follow him, and know the cause.

" *Hel*. My lord, let me intreat you to forbear:

" Leave me alone, to find and cure the cause.

" I know his melancholy, and such starts

" Are usual to his temper. It might raise him

" To act some violence upon himself,

" So to be caught in an unguarded hour,

" And when his soul gives all her passion way,

" Secure and loose in friendly solitude.

" I know his noble heart would burst with shame,

" To be surpris'd by strangers in its frailty.

" *Gar*. Go, generous Heli, and relieve your friend.

" Far be it from me officiously to pry

" Or press upon the privacies of others. [*Exit Heli*].

" Perez, the king expects from our return

" To have his jealousy confirm'd, or clear'd,

" Of that appearing love which Zara bears

" To Osmyn; but some other opportunity

" Must make that plain.

- “ *Per.* To me ’twas long since plain,
 “ And ev’ry look from him and her confirms it.
 “ *Gar.* If so, unhappiness attends their love,
 “ And I could pity ’em. I hear some coming.
 “ The friends, perhaps, are met ; let us avoid ’em.
 [*Exeunt.*

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Alm. It was a fancy’d noise, for all is hush’d.

Leon. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Alm. It was thy fear, or else some transient wind
 Whistling through hollows of this vaulted aisle.
 We’ll listen——

Leon. Hark !

Alm. No, all is hush’d, and still as death——’tis dreadful !

How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
 Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
 To bear aloft its arch’d and pond’rous roof,
 By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,
 Looking tranquility. It strikes an awe
 And terror on my aking sight ; the tombs
 And monumental caves of death look cold,
 And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
 Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice ; 60
 Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
 Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leon. Let us return ; the horror of this place
 And silence will encrease your melancholy.

Alm. It may my fears, but cannot add to that.
 No, I will on ; shew me Anselmo’s tomb,

Lead me o'er bones and skulls, and mould'ring earth
 Of human bodies ; for I'll mix with them,
 Or wind me in the shroud of some pale corse
 Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
 Of Garcia's more detested bed : that thought
 Exerts my spirits ; and my present fears
 Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then shew me,
 Lead me, for I am bolder grown : lead on
 Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
 To him, to Heav'n, and my Alphonso's soul.

" *Leon.* I go ; but Heav'n can tell with what regret.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter HELI.

I wander thro' this maze of monuments,
 Yet cannot find him—Hark ! sure tis the voice
 Of one complaining—There it sounds—I'll follow it.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Opening, discovers a Place of Tombs: one Monument fronting the view greater than the rest.

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Leon. Behold the sacred vault, within whose womb
 The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
 Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms.
 What do I see ? Oh, Heav'n ! either my eyes
 Are false, or still the marble door remains
 Unclos'd ; the iron gates, that lead to death

Beneath, are still wide stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Alm. Sure 'tis the friendly yawn of death for me ;
And that dumb 'mouth, significant in show,
Invites me to the bed, where I alone
Shall rest; shews me the grave, where nature,
weary

And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
Of peace eternal. " Death, grim death, will fold
" Me in his leaden arms, and presses me close
" To his cold clayey breast : " my father then
Will cease his tyranny ; and Garcia too
Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
And range the starry orbs, and milky ways, 101
" Of that refulgent world, where I shall swim
" In liquid light, and float on seas of bliss
To my Alphonso's soul. Oh, joy too great !
Oh, ecstasy of thought ! Help me, Anselmo ;
Help me, Alphonso ; take me, reach thy hand ;
To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso :
Oh, Alphonso !

OSMYN ascending from the tomb.

Ofm. Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso ?

Alm. Angels, and all the host of Heav'n, support me !

Ofm. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness from the grave,

And growing to his father's shroud, roots up
Alphonso !

Alm. Mercy ! Providence ! Oh, speak,
Speak to it quickly, quickly ; speak to me,
Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide me,
Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
And from my eyes.

Ofm. Amazement and illusion !
Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye pow'rs, 120
[*Coming forward*

That, motionless, I may be still deceiv'd.
Let me not stir, nor breathe, lest I dissolve
That tender, lovely form of painted air,
So like Almeria. Ha ! it sinks, it falls ;
I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
'Tis life ! 'tis warm ! 'tis she, 'tis she herself !
Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive !
It is Almeria, 'tis my wife !

Enter HELI.

Leon. Alas ! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her eyes ;
He too is fainting——Help me, help me, stranger,
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Hel. Ha ! 'tis he ! and with——Almeria !
Oh, miracle of happiness ! Oh, joy
Unhop'd for ! does Almeria live ?

Ofm. Where is she ?
Let me behold, and touch her, and be sure
'Tis she ; “ shew me her face, and let me feel
“ Her lips with mine——’Tis she, I'm not deceiv'd ;

“ I taste her breath, I warm’d her and am warm’d.”

Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes; 141

Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.

Alm. I’ve sworn I’ll not wed Garcia : why d’ye
force me.

Is this a father ?

Osm. Look on thy Alphonso.

Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia :

Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.

“ Wilt thou not know me ?” Hast thou then forgot
me ?

“ Hast thou thy eyes, yet canst not see Alphonso ?”

Am I so alter’d, or art thou so chang’d,

That seeing my disguise thou see’st not me ?

Alm. It is, it is Alphonso ; ’tis his face,
His voice, I know him now, I know him all.

“ Oh, take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,

“ Back to the bottom of the boundless deep,

“ To seas beneath, where thou so long hast dwelt.

Oh, how hast thou return’d ? How hast thou charm’d

The wildness of the waves and rocks to this ?

That thus relenting they have giv’n thee back

To earth, to light and life, to love and me. 160

Osm. Oh, I’ll not ask, nor answer, how or why

We both have backward trod the paths of fate,

To meet again in life ; to know I have thee,

Is knowing more than any circumstance,

Or means, by which I have thee——

To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,

And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,

I have not leisure to reflect, or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.

Alm. Stay a while——

Let me look on thee yet a little more.

“*Ofm.* What wouldst thou? thou dost put me from thee.

“*Alm.* Yes.

“*Ofm.* And why? What dost thou mean? Why dost thou gaze so?

“*Alm.* I know not; 'tis to see thy face, I think——”
It is too much! too much to bear and live!
To see thee thus again is such profusion
Of joy, of bliss——I cannot bear——I must
Be mad——I cannot be transported thus.

Ofm. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou Heav'n of love!
180

Alm. Where hast thou been? and how art thou alive?

“How is all this? All-pow'rful Heav'n, what are we?

“Oh, my strain'd heart——let me again behold thee,

“For I weep to see thee——Art thou not paler?

“Much, much; how thou art chang'd!

“*Ofm.* Not in my love.

“*Alm.* No, no, thy griefs, I know, have done this to thee.

“Thou has wept much, Alphonso; and, I fear,

“Too much, too tenderly, lamented me.

“*Ofm.* Wrong not my love, to say too tenderly.

“No more, my life; talk not of tears or grief;

“Affliction is no more, now thou art found.

“Why dost thou weep, and hold thee from my arms,

“ My arms which ake to hold thee fast, and grow

“ To thee with twining ? Come, come to my heart.

“ *Alm.* I will, for I should never look enough.

“ They would have marry’d me ; but I had sworn

“ To Heav’n and thee, and sooner would have dy’d—

“ *Osm.* Perfection of all faithfulness and love! 199

“ *Alm.* Indeed I would—Nay, I would tell thee all,

“ If I could speak ; how I have mourn’d and pray’d :

“ For I have pray’d to thee, as to a saint ;

“ And thou hast heard my pray’r ; for thou art come

“ To my distress, to my despair, which Heav’n

“ Could only, by restoring thee, have cur’d.

“ *Osm.* Grant me but life, good Heav’n, but length
of days,

“ To pay some part, some little of this debt,

“ This countless sum of tenderness and love,

“ For which I stand engag’d to this all-excellence :

“ Then bear me in a whirlwind to my fate,

“ Snatch me from life, and cut me short unwarn’d :

“ Then, then, ’twill be enough—I shall be old,

“ I shall have pass’d all æras then

“ Of yet unmeasur’d time ; when I have made

“ This exquisite, this most amazing goodness,

“ Some recompence of love and matchless truth.

“ *Alm.* ’Tis more than recompence to see thy
face :

“ If Heav’n is greater joy it is no happiness,

“ For ’tis not to be born—What shall I say ?

“ I have a thousand things to know and ask, 220

“ And speak—That thou art here beyond all hope,

“ All thought ; that all at once thou art before me,

“ And with such suddenness hast hit my sight,

"Is such surprise, such mystery, such extasy,

"It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense."

Sure from thy father's tomb thou didst arise?

Ofm. I did; and thou, my love, didst call me;
thou.

Alm. True; but how cam'st thou there? Wert
thou alone?

Ofm. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
When broken echoes of a distant voice
Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,
In murmurs round my head. I rose and listen'd,
And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso;
I thought I saw thee too; but, Oh, I thought not
That I indeed should be so blest to see thee——

Alm. But still, how cam'st thou thither? How thus?
——Ha!

What's he, who, like thyself, is started here
Ere seen?

Ofm. Where? Ha? What do I see, Antonio?
I'm fortunate indeed——my friend too, safe! 240

Heli. Most happily, in finding you thus blest.

Alm. More miracles! Antonio too, escap'd!

Ofm. And twice escap'd; both from the rage of
seas

And war: for in the fight I saw him fall.

Heli. But fell unhurt, a pris'ner as yourself,

And as yourself made free; hither I came,

Impatiently to seek you, where I knew

Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo.

"*Ofm.* There are no wonders, or else all is won-
der.

Heli. I saw you on the ground, and rais'd you up.

"When with astonishment I saw Almeria.

Osm. I saw her too, and therefore saw not thee.

Alm. Nor I; nor could I, for my eyes were
"yours."

Osm. What means the bounty of all-gracious
Heav'n,

That preserving still, with open hand,

It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy!

Where will this end? But Heav'n is infinite

In all, and can continue to bestow,

When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leon. Or I'm deceiv'd, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits cross the aisle; 261
Who by their pointing, seem to mark this place.

Alm. Sure I have dreamt, if we must part so
soon.

Osm. I wish at least our parting were a dream.
Or we could sleep 'till we again were met,

Heli. Zara with Selim, Sir, I saw and know 'em:
You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Alm. What love? Who is she? Why are you
alarm'd?

Osm. She's the reverse of thee; she's my unhappi-
ness.

Harbour no thought that may disturb thy peace;

"But gently take thyself away, lest she

"Should come, and see the straining of my eyes

"To follow thee."

Retire, my love, I'll think how we may meet

To part no more; my friend will tell thee all;

How I escap'd, how I am here, and thus;

How I'm not call'd Alphonso now, but Osmyn ;
 And he Heli. All, all he will unfold,
 Ere next we meet——

Alm. Sure we shall meet again——

Osm. We shall ; we part not but to meet again.
 Gladness and warmth of ever-kindling love
 Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.

[*Exeunt Alm. Leon. and Heli.*]

Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.
 Turn your lights inward, eyes, and view my thoughts,
 So shall you still behold her——'twill not be.
 " Oh, impotence of sight ! Mechanic sense !
 " Which to exterior objects ow'st thy faculty,
 " Not seeing of election, but necessity.
 " Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
 " Successively reflect succeeding images :
 " Not what they would, but must ; a star, or toad ;
 " Just as the hand of chance administers.
 " Not so the mind, whose undetermin'd view
 " Revolves, and to the present adds the past :
 " Essaying farther to futurity ;
 " But that in vain. I have Almeria here
 " At once, as I before have seen her often——

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to
 earth,
 Stiff'ning in thought, a statue among statues. 300
 Why, cruel Osmyn, dost thou fly me thus ?
 " Is it well done ? Is this then the return
 " For fame, for honour, and for empire lost ?

" But what is loss of honour, fame, and empire ?
 " Is this the recompence reserv'd for love ?
 " Why, dost thou leave my eyes, and fly my arms,
 " To find this place of horror and obscurity ?"
 Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,
 That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and shun
 My love ? But to the grave I'll follow thee—
 He looks not, minds not, hears not ? barb'rous man !
 Am I neglected thus ? Am I despis'd
 Not hear'd ! Ungrateful Osmyn !

Osm. Ha, 'tis Zara !

Zar. Yes, traitor ; Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,
 Is a regardless suppliant now, to Osmyn.
 The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from death,
 Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osm. Far be the guilt of such reproaches from
 me ;
 Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts, 320
 I saw you not till now.

Zar. Now then you see me—
 But with such dumb and thankless eyes you look,
 Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osm. What would you from a wretch who came to
 mourn,
 And only for his sorrows chose this solitude ?
 Look round ; joy is not here, nor cheerfulness.
 You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,
 Yet look for gaiety and gladness there.

Zar. Inhuman ! Why, why dost thou rack me
 thus ?
 And, with perverseness, from the purpose, answer ?

What is't to me, this house of misery ?
 What joy do I require ? if thou dost mourn,
 I come to mourn with thee, to share thy griefs,
 And give thee, for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Ofm. Oh, that's the greatest grief—I am so poor,
 I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zar. Thou hast a heart, tho' 'tis a savage one ;
 Give it me as it is ; I ask no more
 For all I've done, and all I have endur'd : 340
 For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,
 Driv'n by the tide upon my country's coast,
 Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,
 Thou and thy friend, 'till my compassion found thee ;
 Compassion ! scarce will't own that name, so soon,
 So quickly, was it love ; for thou wert godlike
 E'en then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,
 And with it dry'd thy watery cheeks, then chaf'd
 Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,
 And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.
 Oh, Heav'n ! how did my heart rejoice and ake,
 When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,
 And felt the balm of thy respiring lips !

“ *Ofm.* Oh, call not to my mind what you have
 “ done ;

“ It sets a debt of that account before me,

“ Which shews me poor and bankrupt even in hopes.”

“ *Zar.* The faithful Selim, and my women, know

“ The danger which I tempted to conceal you.

“ You know how I abus'd the cred'lous king ;

“ What arts I us'd to make you pass on him, 360

“ When he receiv'd you as the prince of Fez ;

“ And as my kinsman, honour'd and advanc'd you.”

Oh! why do I relate what I have done?
 What did I not? Was't not for you this war
 Commenc'd? Not knowing who you were, nor why
 You hated Manuel, I urg'd my husband
 To this invasion; where he late was lost,
 Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

* *Osm. You pierce my soul—I own it all—But while
 The power is wanting to repay such benefits,
 'Tis treble anguish to a generous heart.*

Zara. *Repay me with thy heart—What! dost thou
 flart?*

Make no reply! Is this thy gratitude?
 Look on me now, from empire fall'n to slavery;
 Think on my suff'rings first, then look on me;
 Think on the cause of all, then view thyself:
 Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara,
 The fall'n, the lost, and now the captive Zara,
 And now abandon'd——Say, what then is Osmyn?

*Osm. A fatal wretch—A huge, stupendous ruin,
 That tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath, 381
 And bore contiguous palaces to earth*

Zar. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus levell'd with the
 vilest,

If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin;
 Ruin! 'tis still to reign, and to be more
 A queen; for what are riches, empire, power,
 But larger means to gratify the will?

* The lines printed in Italics are not in the original, but are
 now given to the reader as delivered in the representation at
 Drury-lane Theatre.

The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach
Our wish ; and that obtain'd, down with the scaf-
folding

Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones ; they've serv'd their
end,

And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd.

Ofm. Why was I made the instrument to throw
In bonds the frame of this exalted mind ?

Zara. We may be free ; the conqueror is mine ;
In chains unseen I hold him by the heart,
And can unwind or strain him as I please.
Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Ofm. In vain you offer, and in vain require
What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,
And leave a slave the wretch that would be so. 400

Zar. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou talk'st.

Ofm. Alas ! you know me not.

Zar. Not who thou art :

But what this last ingratitude declares,
This groveling baseness—Thou say'st true, I know
Thee not ; for what thou art yet wants a name ;
But something so unworthy and so vile,
That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,
Than all the malice of my other fate.
Traitor, monster, cold, and perfidious slave ;
A slave not daring to be free ; nor dares
To love above him ; for 'tis dangerous.
“ 'Tis that, I know ; for thou dost look, with eyes
“ Sparkling desire, and trembling to possess.
“ I know my charms have reach'd thy very soul,
“ And thrill'd thee through with darted fires ; but
“ thou

“Dost fear so much, thou dar’st not wish.” The king !

There, there’s the dreadful sound, the king’s thy rival !

Sel. Madam, the king is here, and entering now.

Zar. As I could wish ; by Heav’n I’ll be reveng’d.

Enter the KING, PEREZ, and Attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind withdraw
Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
Of death and night ? Ha ! what disorder’s this ?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention’d.
What’s he that dares be rival to the king,
Or lift his eyes to like where I adore ?

Zar. There, he, your prisoner, and that was my slave.

King. How ? better than my hopes ! Does she accuse him ? *[Aside.*

Zar. Am I become so low by my captivity,
And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
That Zara must be made the sport of slaves ?
And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow’r,
Presume to-day to plead audacious love,
And build bold hopes on my dejected fate ?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of Heav’n,
And wrench the bolt red-hissing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but to think that insolence.

“ ’Tis daring for a god.” Hence to the wheel 440
With that Ixion, who aspires to hold

Divinity embrac'd ; to whips and prisons
Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

[Guards seize Osmyn, and exeunt.]

Zar. Compassion led me to bemoan his state,
Whose former faith had merited much more :
And, through my hopes in you, I undertook
He should be set at large ! thence sprung his infolence,

And what was charity, he constru'd love.

King. Enough ; his punishment be what you please.

But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend, “ and joys,
“ Yet new, unborn, and blooming in the bud,
“ Which wait to be full-blown at your approach,
“ And spread, like roses, to the morning sun :”
Where ev'ry hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-wasting day.
Life, without love, is load ; and time stands still ;
What we refuse to him, to death we give ;
And then, then only, when we love, we live.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Prison. OSMYN with a Paper.

BUT now, and I was clos'd within the tomb
That holds my father's ashes ; and but now,
Where he was pris'ner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of Heav'n that leads me thus,
And for some purpose points out these remembrances.
In a dark corner of my cell I found
This paper ; what it is this light will shew,
' If my Alphonso'——Ha ! [*Reading.*
' If my Alphonso live, restore him, Heav'n ;
' Give me more weight, crush my declining years
' With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want ;
' But blest my son, visit not him for me.
It is his hand ; this was his pray'r——yet more :
' Let ev'ry hair, which sorrow by the roots [*Reading.*
' Tears from my hoary and devoted head,
' Be doubled in thy mercies to my son :
' Not for myself, but him, hear me, all-gracious——
'Tis wanting what should follow——Heav'n should
follow,
But 'tis torn off——Why should that word alone
Be torn from this petition ? 'Twas to Heav'n, 20
But Heav'n was deaf, Heav'n heard him not ; but
thus,
Thus as the name of Heav'n from this is torn,
So did it tear the ears of mercy from

His voice, shutting the gates of pray'r against him.
 If piety be thus debarr'd access
 On high, and of good men the very best
 Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,
 What is reward? Or what is punishment?
 But who shall dare to tax eternal justice!
 Yet I may think—I may, I must; for thought
 Precedes the will to think, and error lives
 Ere reason can be born. “Reason, the power
 “To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp
 “Of wand’ring life, that winks and wakes by turns,
 “Fooling the follower, betwixt shade and shining.”
 What noise! Who’s there? My friend? How cam’st
 thou hither?

Enter HELI.

Heli. The time’s too precious to be spent in
 telling.

The captain influenc’d by Almeria’s power,
 Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Ofm. How does Almeria? But I know she is 40
 As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Heli. You may. Anon, at midnight, when the
 king

Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retir’d,
 “(Who takes the privilege to visit late,
 “Presuming on a bridegroom’s right)” she’ll come.

Ofm. She’ll come; ’tis what I wish, yet what I fear.
 She’ll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh,
 Heav’n!

To a vile prison, and a captiv’d wretch;

'To one, whom, had she never known, she had
 Been happy. Why, why was that heav'nly creature
 Abandon'd o'er to love what Heav'n forsakes?
 Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,
 One, who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing?
 "One driven about the world, like blasted leaves
 "And chaff, the sport of adverse winds: 'till late,
 "At length imprison'd in some cleft of rock,
 "On earth it rests, and rots to silent dust."

Heli. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better
 fate.

I've learn'd there are disorders ripe for mutiny
 Among the troops, who thought to share the plunder,
 Which Manuel to his own use and avarice 61
 Converts. This news has reach'd Valentia's frontiers,
 Where many of your subjects, long oppress'd
 With tyranny, and grievous impositions,
 Are risen in arms, and call for chiefs to head
 And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Ofm. By Heav'n thou'ast rous'd me from my le-
 thargy,

The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,
 And the loud cries of my dead father's blood,
 "Deaf to revenge—nay, which refus'd to hear
 "The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love
 "Yet unenjoy'd; what not Almeria could
 "Revive or raise," my people's voice has waken'd.

Heli. Our posture of affairs, and scanty time
 My lord, require you should compose yourself.

Ofm. Oh, my Antonio! I am all on fire;
 My soul is up in arms, ready to charge
 And bear amidst the foe with conqu'ring troops.

I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,
 To victory ; their shouts and clamours rend 80
 My ears, and reach the Heav'ns. Where is the king ?
 Where is Alphonso ? Ha ! where ? where indeed ?
 Oh, I could tear and burst the strings of life,
 To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty ;
 Off, slavery. Oh, curse ! that I alone
 Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
 Would soar and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. Abate this ardour, Sir, or we are lost.

" Our posture of affairs and scanty time,
 " My lord, require you should compose yourself,
 " And think on what we may reduce to practice."
 Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be
 The means of liberty restor'd. That gain'd,
 Occasion will not fail to point out ways
 For your escape. Mean time, I've thought already
 With speed and safety to convey myself,
 Where not far off some malecontents hold council
 Nightly, who hate this tyrant ; some, who love
 Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,
 When they shall know you love, assist your cause.

*Osm. My friend and counsellor, as thou think'st
 fit,*

So do. I will, with patience, wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Osm. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love : 101

But as I may I'll do. " I have a paper

" Which I would shew thee, friend, but that the
 " fight

" Would hold thee here, and clog thy expedition.

" Within I found it, by my father's hand

" 'Twas writ ; a pray'r for me, wherein appears
 " Paternal love prevailing o'er his sorrows ;
 " Such sanctity, such tendernefs, fo mix'd
 " With grief, as would draw tears from inhumanity.

" *Heli.* The care of Providence fure left it there,
 " To arm your mind with hope. Such piety
 " Was never heard in vain. Heav'n has in ftore
 " For you thofe bleffings it withheld from him.
 " In that affurance live ; which time, I hope,
 " And our next meeting will confirm."

Ofm. Farewel,
 My friend ; the good thou doft deserve, attend thee.

[*Exit Heli.*

I've been to blame, and queftion'd with impiety
 The care of Heav'n. Not fo my father bore
 More anxious grief. This fhould have better taught
 me ;

120

" This leffon, in fome hour of infpiration
 " By him fet down, when his pure thoughts were
 " borne,

" Like fumes of facred incenfe o'er the clouds,
 " And wafted thence, on angel's wings, thro' ways
 " Of light, to the bright Source of all. For there
 " He in the book of prefciencce faw this day ;
 " And waking to the world and mortal fenfe,
 " Left this example of his refignation,"

This his laft legacy to me : which, here,
 I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,
 Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

Enter ZARA, veiled.

Ofm. What brightness breaks upon me thus through
shades,
And promises a day to this dark dwelling ?
Is it my love ?—

Zar. Oh, that thy heart had taught
[Lifting her veil.

Thy tongue that saying !

Ofm. Zara ! I am betray'd
By my surprize.

Zar. What ! does my my face displease thee ?
That, having seen it, thou dost turn thy eyes 149
Away, as from deformity and horror ?
If so, this fable curtain shall again
Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing,
And unseen. Is it my love ? Ask again
That question ; speak again in that soft voice ?
And look again with wishes in thy eyes.
Oh, no ! thou canst not, for thou seest me now,
As she whose savage breast hath been the cause
Of these thy wrongs ; as she whose barb'rous rage
Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.
“ Well dost thou scorn me, and upbraid my false-
“ nefs ;
“ Could one who lov'd, thus torture whom she lov'd ?
“ No, no, it must be hatred, dire revenge,
“ And detestation, that could use thee thus.
“ So dost thou think ; then do but tell me so ;
“ Tell me, and thou shalt see how I'll revenge
“ Thee on this false one, how I'll stab and tear

"This heart of flint, 'till it shall bleed ; and thou
"Shalt weep for mine, forgetting thy own miseries."

Osm. You wrong me, beauteous Zara, to believe
I bear my fortunes with so low a mind, 161

"As still to meditate revenge on all
"Whom chance, or fate, working by secret causes,
"Has made, per-force, subservient to that end
"The heav'nly pow'rs allot me;" no, not you,
But destiny and inauspicious stars
Have cast me down to this low being. Or
Granting you had, from you I have deserv'd it.

Zar. Canst thou forgive me then? wilt thou be-
lieve

So kindly of my fault, to call it madness?

Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,
And call it passion! then, be still more kind,
And call that passion love.

Osm. Give it a name,
Or being, as you please, such I will think it.

Zar. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this thy
goodness,

Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches ;
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Osm. Yet I could wish——

Zar. Haste me to know it; 'what? 180

Osm. That at this time I had not been this thing.

Zar. What thing?

Osm. This slave.

Zar. Oh Heav'n! my fears interpret
This thy silence; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy labouring mind,

And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this? Tell me, am I so curs'd?

Ofm. Time may have still one fated hour to come,
Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasion past.

Zar. Swift as occasion, I
Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn,
Wake thee to freedom. "Now 'tis late; and yet
"Some news few minutes past, arriv'd, which seem'd
"To shake the temper of the king—Who knows
"What racking cares disease a monarch's bed?
"Or love, that late at night still lights his lamp,
"And strikes his rays thro' dusk and folded lids,
"Forbidding rest, may stretch his eyes awake, 200
"And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.
"I'll try."

Ofm. I have not merited this grace;
Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zar. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have I
more

To give, than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu.

[*Exit.*]

Ofm. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem; "to this, she's fair, few more can boast
"Of personal charms, or with less vanity
"Might hope to captivate the hearts of kings;"

But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
 And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
 The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth, 220
 Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
 Will make all fatal. But behold, she comes
 For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
 The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter ALMERIA.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all !
 How shall I welcome thee to this sad place ?
 How speak to thee the words of joy and transport ?
 How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters ;
 Or take thee into mine, while I'm thus manacled
 And pinion'd like a thief or murderer ?
 Shall I not hurt and bruise thy tender body,
 And stain thy bosom with the rust of these
 Rude irons ? Must I meet thee thus, Almeria ?

Alm. Thus, thus ; we parted, thus to meet again.
 Thou told'st me thou would'st think how we might
 meet

To part no more——Now we will part no more ;
 For these thy chains, or death, shall join us ever.

Off. Hard means to ratify that word !—Oh,
 cruelty !

“ That ever I should think beholding thee

“ A torture !—Yet such is the bleeding anguish 240

“ Of my heart, to see thy sufferings——Oh, Heav'n !

“ That I could almost turn my eyes away,

“ Or wish thee from thy sight.

Alm. Oh, say not so !

“ Tho’ ’tis because thou lov’st me. Do not say,

“ On any terms, that thou dost wish me from thee.

“ No, no, ’tis better thus, that we together,

“ Feed on each other’s heart, devour our woes

“ With mutual appetite ; and mingling in

“ One cup the common stream of both our eyes,

“ Drink bitter draughts, with never-slaking thirst ;

“ Thus better, than for any cause to part.

“ What dost thou think ? Look not so tenderly

“ Upon me—speak, and take me in thy arms——

“ Thou canst not ; thy poor arms are bound, and

“ strive

“ In vain with the remorseless chains, which gnaw

“ And eat into thy flesh, fest’ring thy limbs

“ With rankling rust.”

Ofm. Oh ! O——

Alm. Give me that sigh

260

Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs ?

Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red, and start ;

Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.

Ofm. For this world’s rule, I would not wound thy
breast

With such a dagger as then stuck my heart.

Alm. Why ? why ? To know it, cannot wound
me more

Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me,

—Thou giv’st me pain with too much tenderness.

Ofm. And thy excessive love distracts my sense.

Oh, wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind,

Grief could not double thus his darts against me.

Alm. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too robs my heart,

If there he shoot not every other shaft ;
Thy second self should feel each other wound,
And woe should be in equal portions dealt.
I am thy wife—

Ofm. Oh, thou hast search'd too deep :
There, there I bleed ; there pull the cruel cords,
That strain my cracking nerves ; engines and wheels,
That piece-meal grind, are beds of down and balm
To that soul-racking thought. 281

Alm. Then I am curs'd
Indeed, if that be so ! if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then, kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me : " What, am I the bosom-snake
" That sucks thy warm life-blood, and gnaws thy
" heart ;

" Oh, that thy words had force to break those bonds,
" As they have strength to tear this heart in funder ;
" So should'st thou be at large from all oppression."
Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst ?

Ofm. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
" And melt me down to mingle with thy weepings ?
" Why dost thou ask ? Why dost thou talk thus
piercingly ?"

Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Alm. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels were
balm

And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife ?

Ofm. No, no; nor should the subtlest pains that
hell

300

Or hell-born malice can invent, extort

A wish or thought from me to have thee other.

But thou wilt know what harrows up my heart:

Thou art my wife——nay, thou art yet my bride——

The sacred union of connubial love

Yet unaccomplish'd: "his mysterious rites

"Delay'd; nor has our hymeneal torch

"Yet lighted up his last most grateful sacrifice;

"But dash'd with rain from eyes, and swail'd with

"sighs,

"Burns dim, and glimmers with expiring light."

Is this dark cell a temple for that god?

Or this vile earth an altar for such offerings?

This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with woes;

"Is this our marriage bed? are these our joys?"

Is this to call thee mine? Oh, hold, my heart!

To call thee mine? Yes; thus even thus to call

Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest extasy.

But, Oh, thou art not mine, not e'en in misery;

And 'tis deny'd to me to be so blest'd,

As to be wretched with thee.

320

Alm. No; not that

Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder:

That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,

As on the leavings of calamity.

There we will feast and smile on past distress,

And hug, in scorn of it, our mutual ruin.

Ofm. Oh, thou dost talk, my love, as one resolv'd,

Because not knowing danger. But look forward;

Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn

From these weak, struggling, unextended arms :

“ Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will strain,

To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands :

“ Think how the blood will start, and tears will gush,

“ To follow thee, my separating soul.”

Think how I am, when thou shalt wed with Garcia !

Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure

And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair,

Break on the flinty floor my throbbing breast,

And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,

“ Stripping my nails to tear this pavement up.” 340

And bury me alive.

“ *Alm.* Heart-breaking horror ?

Ofm. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy bosom,
Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms ;

“ And thou per-force must yield, and aid his transport.”

Hell! Hell! have I not cause to rage and rave ?

What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this ?

“ Are they not soothing softness, sinking ease,

“ And wafting air to this ?” Oh, my Almeria !

What do the damn'd endure, but to despair,

But knowing Heav'n, to know it lost for ever ?

Alm. Oh, I am struck ; thy words are bolts of ice,
Which shot into my breast, now melt and chill me.

“ I chatter, shake, and faint with thrilling fears.

“ No, hold me not——Oh, let us not support,

“ But sink each other, deeper yet, down, down,

“ Where lell'd low, no more we'll lift our eyes,

“ But prone, and dumb, rot the firm face of earth

“ With rivers of incessant scalding rain.”

Enter ZARA, PEREZ, SELIM.

Zar. Somewhat of weight to me requires his freedom. 360

Dare you dispute the king's command? Behold
The royal signet.

Per. I obey; yet beg
Your majesty one moment to defer
Your ent'ring, 'till the princess is return'd
From visiting the noble prisoner.

Zar. Ha!
What say'st thou?

Osm. We are lost! undone! discover'd!
"Retire, my life, with speed——Alas, we're seen!"
Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak
Of interceding for me with the king;
Say somewhat quickly to conceal our loves,
If possible——

Alm. I cannot speak.

Osm. Let me
Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,
But till she's gone; then bless me thus again.

Zar. Trembling and weeping as he leads her
forth!

Confusion in his face, and grief in hers! 380
'Tis plain I've been abus'd——"Death and destruc-
tion!

"How shall I search into this mystery?
"The bluest blast of pestilential air
"Strike, damp, deaden her charms, and kill his eyes;"
Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em.

Ofm. This charity to one unknown, and thus

[*Aloud to Almeria as she goes out.*

Distress'd, Heav'n will repay ; all thanks are poor.

[*Exit Almeria.*

Zar. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler ! Yet I will be calm,

Choak in my rage, and know the utmost depth
Of this deceiver——You seem much surpris'd. 390

Ofm. At your return so soon and unexpected !

Zar. And so unwish'd, unwanted too it seems.

Confusion ! Yet I will contain myself.

You're grown a favourite since last we parted ;

Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding——

Ofm. ——Madam !

Zar. I did not know the princess' favourite.

Your pardon, sir——mistake me not ; you think

I'm angry ; you're deceiv'd. I came to set

You free ; but shall return much better pleas'd,

To find you have an interest superior.

Ofm. You do not come to mock my miseries ?

Zar. I do.

Ofm. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zar. I know thou couldst ; but I'm not often
pleas'd.

And will indulge it now. What miseries ?

Who would not be thus happily confin'd,

To be the care of weeping majesty ;

To have contending queens at dead of night,

Forsake their down, to wake with wat'ry eyes, 410

And watch like tapers o'er your hours of rest ?

Oh, curse ! I cannot hold——

Ofm. Come, 'tis too much.

Zar. Villain!

Ofm. How, madam!

Zar. Thou shalt die.

Ofm. I thank you.

Zar. Thou ly'st, for now I know for whom thou'd'st live.

Ofm. Then you may know for whom I'd die.

Zar. Hell! Hell!

Yet I'll be calm——Dark and unknown betrayer!

But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand

Of Fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave

Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.

Ofm. You may be still deceiv'd, 'tis in my pow'r——

Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs

And free myself, at once, from misery,

And you of me.

Zar. Ha! say'st thou—but I'll prevent it——

Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this

slave

[*To the guard.*

Attempt no means to make himself away.

431

I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now

Requires he should be more confin'd, and none,

No, not the princefs; suffer'd or to see

Or speak with him. I'll quit you to the king.

Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent

The base injustice thou hast done my love:

Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,

And all those ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;

Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,

Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Room of State. ZARA, SELIM.

Zara.

THOU hast already rack'd me with thy stay ;
Therefore require me not to ask thee twice :
Reply at once to all. What is concluded ?

Sel. Your accusation highly has incens'd
The king, and were alone enough to urge
The fate of Osmyn ; but to that, fresh news
Is since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.
'Tis certain Heli, too, is fled, and with him
(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some
Who bore high offices of weight and trust,
Both in the state and army. This confirms
The king in full belief of all you told him.
Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence
With them who first began the mutiny.
Wherefore a warrant for his death is sign'd ;
And order giv'n for public execution.

Zar. Ha ! haste thee ! fly, prevent his fate and
mine ;

Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
More than his crown t' impart ere Osmyn die.

Sel. It needs not, for the king will straight be here,
And, as to your revenge, not his own int'rest, 21
Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zar. What shall I say, invent, contrive, advise?
Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life,
In whom I live. "Spite of my rage and pride,
" I am a woman, and a lover still.
" Oh! 'tis more grief but to suppose his death,
" Than still to meet the rigour of his scorn.
" From my despair my anger had its source;
" When he is dead I must despair for ever.
" For ever! that's despair—it was distrust
" Before; distrust will ever be in love,
" And anger in distrust; both short-liv'd pains.
" But in despair, and ever-during death,
" No term, no bound, but infinite of woe.
" Oh, torment, but to think? what then to bear?
" Not to be borne"—Devise the means to shun it,
Quick; or, by Heav'n, this dagger drinks thy blood.

Sel. My life is yours, nor wish I to preserve it,
But to serve you. I have already thought. 40

Zar. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and
truth.

But say, what's to be done, or when, or how,
Shall I prevent or stop th' approaching danger?

Sel. You must still seem more resolute and fix'd
On Osmyn's death; too quick a change of mercy
Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise
That execution may be done in private.

Zar. On what pretence?

Sel. Your own request's enough.
However, for a colour, tell him, you
Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,
And some of them bought off to Osmyn's interest,
Who at the place of execution will

Attempt to force his way for an escape ;
 The state of things will countenance all suspicions.
 Then offer to the king to have him strangled
 In secret by your mutes ; and get an order,
 That none but mutes may have admittance to him.
 I can no more, the king is here. Obtain
 This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest. 60

Enter KING, GONSALEZ, and PEREZ.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebellious slaves,
 " Th' ignoble curs that yelp to fill the cry,
 " And spend their mouths in barking tyranny."
 But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
 Let 'em be led away to present death.
 Perez, see it perform'd.

Gons. Might I presume,
 Their execution better were deferred,
 'Till Osmyn die. Mean time we may learn more
 Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.
 Stay, soldier ; they shall suffer with the Moor.
 Are none return'd of those who follow'd Heli ?

Gons. None, sir. Some papers have been since discovered
 In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,
 Which seem'd to intimate, as if Alphonso
 Were still alive, and arming in Valentia :
 Which wears indeed this colour of a truth,
 They who are fled have that way bent their course.
 Of the same nature divers notes have been 80

Dispers'd t' amuse the people ; whereupon
Some, ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour :
That, being sav'd upon the coast of Afric,
He there disclos'd himself to Albucacim,
And, by a secret compact made with him,
Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion ;
While he himself, returning to Valentia
In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zar. Ha ! hear'st thou that ? Is Osmyn then Alphonso :

“ Oh, heav'n ! a thousand things occur at once
“ To my remembrance now, that make it plain.”
Oh, certain death for him, as sure despair
For me, if it be known——If not, what hope
Have I ? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness now,
To yield him up——No, I will conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

Gons. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may be
That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive Zara can inform,
If such a one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd, 100
At any time in Albucacim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neglect :
An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love ;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zar. You're too secure : the danger is more imminent /

Than your high courage suffers you to see ;
While Osmyn lives, you are not safe.

King. His doom
Is pass'd, if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zar. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your entrance,

I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One, who did call himself Alphonso,
Was cast upon my coast; as 'tis reported,
And oft had private conference with the king;
To what effect I knew not then: but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league 129
Of strictest friendship was profess'd between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratify'd in this.

Zar. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.

King. Give order strait, that all the pris'ners die.

Zar. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have
Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonzalez, leave the room.

[*Exit Perez, &c.*]

Zar. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly;
And, in return of that, tho' otherwise
Your enemy, "I have discover'd Osmyn,
His private practice and conspiracy
Against your state: and, fully to discharge
Myself of what I've undertaken," now
I think it fit to tell you, that your guards
Are tainted; some among 'em have resolv'd
To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason then so near us as our guards ?

Zar. Most certain; tho' my knowledge is not yet
So ripe, to point at the particular men. 140

King. What's to be done ?

Zar. That too I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,
A present once from the sultana queen,
In the grand signior's court. These from their in-
fancy

Are practis'd in the trade of death; and shall
(As there the custom is) in private strangle
Osmyn.

Gons. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What off'ring, or what recompence remains
In me, that can be worthy so great services ?
To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,
Tho' on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zar. Of that hereafter : but, mean time, 'tis fit
You give strict charge that none may be admitted
To see the pris'ner, but such mutes as I
Shall send.

King. Who waits there ?

Enter PEREZ.

King. On your life, take heed
That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring 160
Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zar. They, and no other, not the princefs' self.

Per. Your Majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire.

[*Exit Perez.*]

Gons. That interdiction so particular
Pronounc'd with vehemence against the princess,
Should have more meaning than appears barefac'd.
The king is blinded by his love, and heeds
It not. [*Afide.*]—Your majesty sure might have spar'd
The last restraint : you hardly can suspect
The princess is confed'rate with the Moor.

Zar. I've heard her charity did once extend
So far, to visit him at his request.

Gons. Ha !

King. How ! She visit Osmyn ! What, my
daughter ?

Sel. Madam, take heed ; or you have ruin'd all.

Zar. And after did solicit you on his
Behalf.—

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zar. Indeed ! Then 'twas a whisper spread by
some

Who wish'd it so : a common art in courts, 181
I will retire and instantly prepare
Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit Zara and Selima.*]

Gons. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this ;
Her words and actions are obscure and double,
Sometimes concur, and sometimes disagree :
I like it not. [*Afide.*]

King. What dost thou think, Gonfalez ?
Are we not much indebted to this fair one ?

Gons. I am a little slow of credit, fir,
In the sincerity of women's actions.
Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor
Disquiets her too much ; which makes it seem

As if she'd rather that she did not hate him.

I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd

As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards
Corrupted! How? By whom? Who told her so?

I' th' evening Osmyn was to die; at midnight

She begg'd the royal signet to release him;

I' th' morning he must die again; ere noon 200

Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll

Escape. This put together suits not well.

King. Yet that there's truth in what she has discover'd

Is manifest from every circumstance.

This tumult, and the lords who fled with Heli,

Are confirmation;—that Alphonso lives

Agrees expressly too, with her report.

Gons. I grant it, sir; and doubt not, but in rage
Of jealousy, she has discover'd what

She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd.

But why that needless caution of the princess?

What if she had seen Osmyn? Tho' t'were strange;

But if she had, what was't to her? Unless

She fear'd her stronger charms might cause the
Moor's

Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend.

There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.—

But think'st thou that my daughter saw this Moor?

Gons. If Osmyn be, as Zara has related

Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible 220

But she might wish, on his account, to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By Heav'n, thou hast rous'd a
thought,

That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame.
 Confusion ! then my daughter's an accomplice,
 And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gons. That were too hard a thought—but see,
 she comes—

'Twere not amiss to question her a little,
 And try, how'er, if I've divin'd aright.
 If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd
 For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend :
 Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria ;
 I had determined to have sent for you.
 Let your attendant be dismiss'd ; I have

[*Leonora retires.*

To talk with you. Come near ; why dost thou shake ?
 What mean those swell'n and red-fleck'd eyes, that
 look

As they had wept in blood, and worn the night
 In waking anguish ? Why this on the day
 Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials ;
 But that the beams of light are to be stain'd 240
 With reeking gore, from traitors on the rack ?
 Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites ;
 Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day
 Profane that jubilee.

Alm. All days to me
 Henceforth are equal : this, the day of death,
 To-morrow, and the next, and each that follows

Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know the
cause ;

And look thou answer me with truth ; for know
I am not unacquainted with thy falshood.

Why art thou mute ? Base and degen'rate maid !

Gons. Dear madam, speak, or you'll incense the
king.

Alm. What is't to speak ? Or wherefore should I
speak ?

What mean these tears but grief unutterable ?

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy
mind ;

They mean thy guilt, and say thou wert confed'rate
With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh, impious parricide! Now canst thou speak? 260

Alm. O earth, behold, I kneel upon thy bosom,
And bend my flowing eyes to stream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield ;
Open thy bowels of compassion, take
Into thy womb the last and most forlorn
Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent
——I have no parent else——be thou a mother,
And step between me and the curse of him
Who was—who was, but is no more a father ;
But brands my innocence with horrid crimes ;
And, for the tender names of child and daughter,
Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Rise, I command thee, rise—and if thou
wouldst

Acquit thyself of these detested names,

Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog,
Now doom'd to die, that most accursed Osmyn.

Alm. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purposes. So Heaven's
My witness.

King. Vile equivocating wretch! 280

With innocence! Oh, patience! hear—she owns it!
Confesses it! By Heav'n, I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangled, flay'd, impal'd—all pains and tor-
tures

That wit of man, or dire revenge can think,
Shall he, accumulated, underbear.

Alm. Oh, I am lost.—There fate begins to wound.

King. Hear me, then; if thou canst reply; know,
traitrefs,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives;
Nor am I ignorant what Osmyn is——

Alm. Then all is ended, and we both must die.
Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die.
And yet alone would I have dy'd, Heav'n knows,
Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.

“Yes, all my father's wounding wrath, tho' each

“Reproach cuts deeper than the keenest sword,

“And cleaves my heart, I would have borne it all,

“Nay all the pains that are prepar'd for thee;

“To the remorseless rack I wou'd have giv'n

“This weak and tender flesh, to have been bruised

“And torn, rather than have reveal'd thy being.”

King. Hell, hell! Do I hear this, and yet en-
dure!

What, dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?

Hence, ere I curse—fly my just rage with speed ;
Left I forget us both, and spurn thee from me. . .

Alm. And yet a father ! Think, I am your child !
Turn not your eyes away—look on me kneeling ;
Now curse me if you can, now spurn me off.
Did ever father curse his kneeling child ?
Never ; for always blessings crown that posture.
“ Nature inclines, and half way meets that duty,
“ Stooping to raise from earth the filial reverence ;
“ For bended knees returning folding arms,
“ With pray’rs, and blessings, and paternal love.”
Oh, hear me then, thus crawling on the earth——

King. Be thou advis’d, and let me go, while yet
The light impression thou hast made remains.

Alm. No, never will I rise, nor lose this hold,
’Till you are mov’d, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha ! Who may live ? Take heed ! No more
of that ;

For on my soul he dies, tho’ thou and I, 320
And all should follow to partake his doom.
Away, off, let me go——Call her attendants.

[*Leonora and women return.*]

Alm. Drag me ; and harrow the earth with my bare
Bosom ;

I will not go ’till you have spar’d my husband.

King. Ha ! “ What say’st thou ?” Husband !
“ Husband ! damnation !

“ What husband !” Which ? Who ?

Alm. He, he is my husband.

King. “ Poison and daggers !” Who ?

Alm. Oh——— [*Faints.*]

“ *Gons.* Help, support her.”

Alm. Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I'll dig,
I'll dig a grave, and tear up death; "I will;
"I'll scrape, 'till I collect his rotten bones,
"And cloath their nakedness with my own flesh;"
Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:
I will be death; then, tho' you kill my husband,
He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband? Whom dost thou mean?

Gons. She raves!

Alm. "Oh, that I did." Osmyn, he is my husband.
340

King. Osmyn!

Alm. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso, is my dear
And wedded husband——Heav'n, and air, and seas,
Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness.

King. Wilder than winds or waves thyself dost
rave
Should I hear more, I too should catch thy mad-
ness.

"Yet somewhat she must mean of dire import,
"Which I'll not hear, 'till I am more at peace."
Watch her returning sense, and bring me word;
And look that she attempt not on her life.

[Exit King.]

Alm. Oh, stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not mad.
I would to Heav'n I were——He's gone.

Gons. Have comfort.

Alm. Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of
comfort;
Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his pity;
Curs'd these weak hands, that could not hold him
here?

For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gons. Your too excessive grief works on your fancy,

And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,
Is far from hence, beyond your father's pow'r. 360

Alm. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flatterer;
Source of my woes: thou and thy race be curs'd;
But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy
And fraud to find the fatal secret out,
And know that Osmyn was Alphonso.

Gons. Ha!

Alm. Why dost thou start? What dost thou see or hear?

Was it the doleful bell, tolling for death?
Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast?
See, see, look yonder! where a grizzled, pale,
And ghastly head glares by, all smear'd with blood,
Gasping as it would speak; and after, see,
Behold, a damp, dead hand has dropp'd a dagger:
I'll catch it—Hark! a voice cries murder! ah!
My father's voice! hollow it sounds, and calls
Me from the tomb—I'll follow it; for there
I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[*Excunt Almería and Leonora.*]

Gons. She's greatly griev'd; nor am I less surpriz'd.

Osmyn, Alphonso! No; she over-rates
My policy; I ne'er suspected it; 380
Nor now had known it, but from her mistake.
Her husband too! Ha! Where is Garcia then?
And where the crown that should descend on him,

To grace the line of my posterity ?
 Hold, let me think—if I should tell the king—
 Things come to this extremity : his daughter
 Wedded already.—what if he should yield ?
 Knowing no remedy for what is past,
 And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
 With which he seems to be already shaken.
 And tho' I know he hates beyond the grave
 Anselmo's race ; yet if——that If concludes me.
 To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
 But how prevent the captive queen, who means
 To set him free ? Ay, now 'tis plain. O well
 Invented tale ! He was Alphonso's friend.
 This subtle woman will amuse the king.
 If I delay——'twill do——or better so.
 One to my wish. Alonzo thou art welcome.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. The king expects your lordship. 400

Gons. 'Tis no matter.

I'm not i' the way at present, good Alonzo.

Alon. If 't please your lordship, I'll return, and
 say

I have not seen you.

Gons. Do, my best Alonzo,

Yet stay, I would——but go ; anon will serve——

Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.

I think thou would'st not stop to do me service.

Alon. I am your creature.

Gons. Say thou art my friend.

I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alon. All that it can your lordship shall command.

Gons. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word.
Thou'st seen,

Amongst the followers of the captive queen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by
signs.

Alon. I have, my lord.

Gons. Could'st thou procure, with speed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of those, tho' purchas'd by his death, I'd give
Thee such reward, as should exceed thy wish. 420

Alon. Conclude it done. Where shalt I wait your
lordship?

Gons. At my apartment. Use thy utmost diligence;

And say I've not been seen—Haste, good Alonzo.

[*Exit Alonzo.*]

So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,

The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.

Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;

And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head. [*Exit.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A room of State. Enter KING, PEREZ, and ALONZO.

King.

NOR to be found! In an ill hour he's absent.

None, say you? none! What, not the fav'rite
eunuch?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mates,

Have yet requir'd admittance?

Per. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Per. Fast bound in double chains, and at full
length

He lies supine on earth; with as much ease

She might remove the centre of this earth,

As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[A mute appears, and seeing the king, retires.]

Ha! stop, and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow him.

Ent'ring he met my eyes, and starting back,

Frighted, and fumbling, one hand in his bosom,

As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[Alonzo follows him and returns with a paper.]

Alon. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alon. Soon as I seiz'd the man,

He snatch'd from out his bosom this—and strove

With rash and greedy haste, at once, to cram

The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm,
And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from him;
Which done, he drew a poignard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence, ere Zara see it.

Alon. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire;

'Twill quit me of my promise to Gonfalez.

[*Afide. Ex.*

Per. Whate'er it is, the king's complexion turns."

King. How's this? My mortal foe beneath my roof!

[*Having read the letter.*

Oh, give me patience, all ye powers! No, rather
Give me new rage, implacable revenge,
And trebled fury—Ha! who's there?

Per. My lord.

King. Hence, slave! how dar'st thou bide to watch
and pry

Into how poor a thing a king descends,
How like thyself, when passion treads him down?
Ha! stir not, on thy life; for thou wert fix'd,
And planted here, to see me gorge this bait,
And lash against the hook—By Heav'n, you're all
Rank traitors! thou art with the rest combin'd: 40
Thou knew'st that Osmyn was Alphonso; knew'st
My daughter privately with him conferr'd;
And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Per. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd—

King. Thou ly'st.

Thou art accomplice too with Zara; here
Where she sets down—*Still will I set thee free—*
[*Reading—*

That somewhere is repeated—*I have power
O'er them that are thy guards*—Mark that, thou traitor.

Per. It was your majesty's command I should
Obey her order.—

King. [Reading.]—*And still will I set
Thee free, Alphonso*—Hell! curs'd, curs'd Alphonso
False and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter!
Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love;
All nature, softness, pity and compassion,
This hour I throw ye off, and entertain
Fell hate within my breast, revenge and gall.
By Heav'n, I'll meet, and counterwork this treachery.
Hark thee, villain, traitor—answer me, slave. 60

Per. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'fst thou reply? "Take that"—thy service!
"thine!" " [Strikes him.

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my
One moment's ease? Hear my command; and look
That thou obey, or horror on thy head:
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.
Why dost thou start? Resolve, or—

Per. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well—that when she comes to set him
free,

His teeth may grin, and mock at her remorse.

[Perez going.

—Stay thee—I've farther thought—I'll add to this,
And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.

I'll be conducted thither——mark me well——
 There with his turban, and his robe array'd,
 And laid along, as he now lies, supine,
 I shall convict her, to her face, of falshood.
 When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand, 80
 And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;
 Sudden I'll start and dash her with her guilt.
 But see, she comes. I'll shun th' encounter; thou
 Follow me, and give heed to my direction. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter ZARA and SELIM.

Zar. "The mute not yet return'd!" ha! 'twas the
 king,

The king that parted hence! frowning he went;
 "His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
 "Their red and angry beams; as if his sight
 "Would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth,
 "And kindle ruin in its course:" Dost think
 He saw me?

Sel. Yes: but then, as if he thought
 His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
 Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Zar. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast undone
 me.

"Thy shallow artifice begets suspicion,
 "And like a cobweb veil, but thinly shades
 "The face of thy design! alone disguising
 "What should have ne'er been seen; imperfect mis-
 "chief!
 "Thou, like the adder, venomous and deaf, 100
 "Hast stung the traveller, and after hear'st

“ Not his pursuing voice; e’en when thou think’st
“ To hide, the rustling leaves and bended grass
“ Confess and point the path which thou hast crept.
“ Oh, fate of fools! officious in contriving;
“ In executing, puzzled, lame, and lost.”

Sel. Avert it Heav’n, that you should ever suffer
For my defect; or that the means which I
Devis’d to serve, should ruin your design.
Prescience is Heav’n’s alone, not giv’n to man,
If I have fail’d, in what, as being man,
I needs must fail; impute not as a crime
My nature’s want, but punish nature in me;
I plead not for a pardon, and to live,
But to be punish’d and forgiven. Here, strike;
I bare my breast to meet your just revenge.

Zar. I have not leisure now to take so poor
A forfeit as thy life; somewhat of high
And more important fate requires my thought.
“ When I’ve concluded on myself, if I 120
“ Think fit, I’ll leave thee my command to die.”
Regard me well; and dare not to reply
To what I give in charge; for I’m resolv’d.
Give order that the two remaining mutes
Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
Of such ingredients mix’d, as will with speed
Benumb the living faculties, and give
Most easy and inevitable death.
Yes, Osmyn, yes; be Osmyn or Alphonso,
I’ll give thee freedom, if thou dar’st be free:
Such liberty as I embrace myself,

Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford ;
 I can but die with thee, to keep my word. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Opening, shews the Prison. Enter GONSALEZ disguised like a Mute, with a Dagger.

Gons. Nor centinel, nor guard! the doors unbarr'd!
 And all as still, as at the noon of night!
 Sure death already has been busy here.
 There lies my way; that door too is unlock'd.

[*Looking in.*]

Ha! sure he sleeps—all's dark within, save what
 A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
 By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd, to favour 140
 Th' attempt: I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
 What noise! somebody coming? is't Alonzo?
 Nobody. Sure he'll wait without—I would
 'Twere done—I'll crawl, and sting him to the heart,
 Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it.

[*Goes in.*]

Enter GARCIA and ALONZO.

Gar. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my father?
 where

The king? Confusion! all is on the rout!
 All's lost, all ruin'd by surprize and treachery.
 Where, where is he! Why dost thou mislead me?

Alon. My lord, he enter'd but a moment since,
And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What ho!
My lord, my lord! What ho! my lord Gonzalez!

Enter GONSALEZ bloody.

Gons. Perdition choke your clamours—whence
this rudeness?

Garcia!

Gar. Perdition, slavery, and death,
Are entering now our doors. Where is the king?
What means this blood; and why this face of horror?

Gons. No matter—give me first to know the cause.
Of these your rash, and ill-tim'd exclamations.

Gar. The eastern gate is to the foe betray'd,
Who, but for heaps of slain that choke the passage,
Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
Before 'em, to the palace walls. Unless
The king in person animate our men,
Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
The traitor Perez, and the captive Moor,
Are through a postern fled, and join'd the foe.

Gons. Would all were false as that; for whom you
call

The Moor, is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
In whose heart's blood this poignard yet is warm.

Gar. Impossible; for Osmyn was, while flying,
Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gons. Enter that chamber, and convince your eyes,
How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

[Garcia goes in.]

Alon. My lord, for certain truth, Perez is fled ;
And has declar'd, the cause of his revolt
Was to revenge a blow the king had given him.

Gar. [*Returning*] Ruin and horror ! Oh, heart-
wounding sight !

Gons. What says my son ? What ruin ? Ha ! what
horror ?

Gar. Blasted my eyes, and speechless be my tongue,
Rather than or to see, or to relate
This deed—Oh, dire mistake ! Oh, fatal blow !
The king——

Gons. Alon. The king !

Gar. Dead, welt'ring, drown'd in blood.
See, see, attir'd like Osmyn, where he lies,
[*They look in.*]

Oh, whence, or how, or wherefore was this done ?
But what imports the manner or the cause ?
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate with our own, his blood.

Gons. Oh, wretch ! Oh, cursed rash deluded fool !
On me, on me turn your avenging swords.
I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Gar. Ha ! what ! atone this murder with a greater !
The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.
“ The earth already groans to bear this deed ;
“ Oppress her not, nor think to stain her face
“ With more unnatural blood. Murder my father !
“ Better with this to rip up my own bowels,

" And bathe it to the hilt, in far less damnable
" Self-murder."

Gons. Oh, my son ! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose.
For thee I've been ambitious, base, and bloody :
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin ;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreath thy brow)
Whose weight has sunk me, ere I reach'd the shore.

Gar. Fatal ambition ! Hark ! the foe is enter'd :
[*Shout.*

The shrillness of that shout speaks them at hand.

" We have no time to search into the cause

" Of this surprising and most fatal error.

" What's to be done? the king's death known, would
strike

" The few remaining soldiers with despair,

" And make them yield to mercy of the conqueror."

Alon. My lord, I've thought how to conceal the
body.

Require me not to tell the means, till done,
Left you forbid what you may then approve.

[*Goes in. Shout.*

Gons. They shout again ! Whate'er he means to do,
'Twere fit the soldiers were amus'd with hopes ;
And in the mean time fed with expectation
To see the king in person at their head.

Gar. Were it a truth, I fear 'tis now too late.
But I'll omit no care, nor haste ! and try,
Or to repel their force, or bravely die.

[*Exit Gar.*

Re-enter ALONZO.

Gons. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alon. Such a deed,

As but an hour ago I'd not have done,
Though for the crown of universal empire.
But what are kings reduc'd to common clay?
Or who can wound the dead?—I've from the body
Sever'd the head, and in an obscure corner
Dispos'd it, muffled in the mute's attire,
Leaving to view of them who enter next,
Alone the undistinguishable trunk:
Which may be still mistaken by the guards
For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king,
They chance to find it.

Gons. 'Twas an act of horror;
And of a piece with this day's dire misdeeds.
But 'tis no time to ponder or repent.
Haste thee, Alonzo, haste thee hence with speed,
To aid my son. I'll follow with the last
Reserve, to reinforce his arms: at least,
I shall make good and shelter his retreat.

[Exeunt severally.]

Enter ZARA, followed by SELIM, and two Mutes bearing the bowls.

Zar. Silence and solitude are every where.
Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is seen or heard. "A dreadful din was wont
To grate the sense, when enter'd here, from groans

“ And howls of slaves condemn’d ; from clink of chains,

“ And crash of rusty bars and creaking hinges :

“ And ever and anon the fight was dash’d

“ With frightful faces, and the meagre looks

“ Of grim and ghastly executioners.

“ Yet more this stillness terrifies my soul,

“ Than did that scene of complicated horrors.

“ It may be that the cause of this my errand

“ And purpose, being changed from life to death,

“ Had also wrought this chilling change of temper.

“ Or does my heart bode more ? What can it more

“ Than death ?”

Let ’em fet down the bowls, and warn Alphonso

That I am here—so. You return and find

[*Mutes going in.*]

The king ; tell him, what he requir’d, I’ve done,

And wait his coming to approve the deed.

Exit Selim.

Enter Mutes.

Zar. What have you seen ? Ha ! wherefore stare
you thus [*The mutes return and look affrighted.*]

With haggard eyes ? Why are your arms across ?

Your heavy and desponding heads hung down ?

Why is’t you more than speak in these sad signs ?

Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.

[*They go to the scene, which opening, she perceives the body.*]

Ha ! prostrate ! bloody ! headless ! Oh—I’m lost,

Oh, Osmyn ! Oh, Alphonso ! Cruel fate !

Cruel, cruel, Oh, more than killing object !
 I came prepar'd to die, and see thee die—
 Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—
 But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn——
 Oh, this accurs'd, this base, this treach'rous king !

Enter SELIM.

Sel. I've fought in vain, for no where can the king
 Be found——

Zar. Get thee to hell, and seek him there.

[Stabs him.]

His hellish rage had wanted means to act,
 But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Sel. You thought it better then—but I'm rewarded.
 The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,
 And forc'd to yield your letter with his life ;
 I found the dead and bloody body stripp'd——
 My tongue falters, and my voice fails—I sink
 Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is—— *[Dies.]*

Zar. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be.
 'Tis not that he is dead: for 'twas decreed
 We both should die. Nor is't that I survive ;
 I have a certain remedy for that.
 But, Oh, he dy'd unknowing in my heart.
 He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height :
 Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
 A martyr and a victim to my vows.
 Insensible of this last proof he's gone ;
 " Yet fate alone can rob his mortal part
 " Of sense ? his soul still sees and knows each pur-
 pose,

And fix'd event, of my persisting faith."
Then wherefore do I pause? Give me the bow!

[*A mute kneels and gives one of the bows.*]

Hover a moment, yet, thou gentle spirit,
Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight.
This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above. [*Drinks.*]
Oh, friendly draught, already in my heart.
Cold, cold; my veins are icicles and frost.
I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there;
Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,
And fright him from my arms—See, see, he slides
Still farther from me; look, he hides his face,
I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach,—
Oh, now he's gone, and all is dark—— [*Discs.*]
[*The mutes kneel and mourn over her.*]

Enter ALMERIA and LEONORA.

Alm. Oh, let me seek him in this horrid cell;
For in the tomb, or prison, I alone
Must hope to find him.

Leon. Heavens! what dismal scene
Of death is this? The eunuch Selim slain!

Alm. Shew me, for I am come in search of death;
But want a guide; for tears have dimm'd my sight.

Leon. Alas, a little farther, and behold
Zara all pale and dead! two frightful men,
Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by;
Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.
But, Oh, forbear—lift up your eyes no more;
But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
Where miseries are multiply'd; return,
Return, and look not on; for there's a dagger

Ready to stab the sight, and make your eyes
Rain blood——

Alm. Oh, I foreknow, foresee that object.

Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?

“What, dead at last? quite, quite, for ever dead?”

“There, there, I see him; there he lies, the blood

“Yet bubbling from his wounds—Oh, more than sa-
vage!

“Had they or hearts or eyes that did this deed?”

“Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands?”

“Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,

“That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone?”

——I do not weep! The springs of tears are dry’d;

And of a sudden I am calm, as if

All things were well; and yet my husband’s murder’d!

Yes, yes, I know to mourn! I’ll sluice this heart,

The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.

——Those men have left to weep! they look on me!

I hope they murder all on whom they look.

Behold me well; your bloody hands have err’d,

And wrongfully have slain those innocents:

I am the sacrifice design’d to bleed,

And come prepar’d to yield my throat—They shake

Their heads in sign of grief and innocence!

[They point at the bowl on the ground.]

And point! What mean they? Ha! a cup; Oh, well,

I understand what med’cine has been here.

Oh, noble thirst! yet greedy to drink all——

——Oh, for another draught of death——“What
mean they? *[They point at the other cup.]*

“Ha! point again!” ’tis there, and full, I hope.

Thanks to the lib'ral hand that fill'd thee thus,
I drink my glad acknowledgment —

Leon. Oh, hold

or mercy's sake, upon my knee I beg——

Alm. With thee the kneeling world should beg in
vain.

Heest thou not there? Behold who prostrate lies,
And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?

Yet I will take a cold and parting leave
From his pale lips; I'll kiss him ere I drink,
Lest the rank juice should blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headless trunk! nor lips nor face,

[*Coming near the body, starts and lets fall the cup.*

But spouting veins, and mangled flesh! Oh, oh!

Enter ALPHONSO, HELI, PEREZ, with GARCIA prisoner. Guards and attendants.

Alph. Away, stand off, where is she? let me fly,
Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Alm. Oh!

Alph. Forbear; my arms alone shall hold her up.
Warm her to life; and wake her into gladness.

“ Oh, let me talk to thy reviving sense

“ The words of joy and peace; warm thy cold beauties

“ With the new flushing ardour of my cheek;

“ Into thy lips pour the soft trickling balm

“ Of cordial sighs; and reinspire thy bosom

“ With the breath of love. Shine, awake, Almeria,

Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes,

Then double on the day reflected light.

Alm. Where am I? Heav'n! what does this dream intend?

Alph. Oh, may'st thou never dream of less delight,
Nor ever wake to less substantial joys.

Alm. Giv'n me again from death! Oh, all ye pow'rs,
Confirm this miracle! Can I believe
My sight "against my sight? and shall I trust
"That sense, which in one instant shews him dead
"And living?"—Yes, I will; I've been abus'd
With apparitions and affrighting phantoms:
This is my lord, my life, my only husband,
I have him now, and we no more will part.
My father, too, shall have compassion——

Alph. Oh, my heart's comfort; 'tis not giv'n to this
Frail life to be entirely blest'd. E'en now,
In this extremest joy my soul can taste,
Yet I am dash'd to think that thou must weep;
Thy father fell where he design'd my death.
Gonzalez and Alonzo, both of wounds
Expiring, have, with their last breath, confess'd
The just decrees of Heav'n, which on themselves
Has turn'd their own most bloody purposes.
Nay, I must grant, 'tis fit you should be thus——

[*She weeps.*]

"Let 'em remove the body from her sight."

Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup! Alas!

Thy error then is plain! but I were flint

Not to o'erflow in tribute to thy memory.

Oh, Garcia!——

Whose virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes,

Seest thou how just the hand of Heav'n has been?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,
And not from past or present ills despair;
For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds;
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ALMERIA.

THE tragedy thus done, *I* am, you know,
No more a princess, but in statu quo;
And now as unconcern'd this mourning wear,
As if indeed a widow or an heir.
I've leisure, now, to mark your sev'ral faces,
And know each critic by his sour grimaces.
To poison plays, *I* see them where they sit,
Scatter'd, like ratbane, up and down the pit;
While others watch, like parish searchers hir'd,
To tell of what disease the play expir'd.
Oh, with what joy they run to spread the news
Of a damn'd poet and departed muse!
But if he 'scape, with what regret they're seiz'd!
And how they're disappointed, when they're pleas'd!
Critics to plays for the same end resort,
That surgeons wait on trials in a court:
For innocence condemn'd they've no respect,
Provided they've a body to dissect.
As Sussex men, that dwell upon the shore,
Look out when storms arise, and billows roar,
Devoutly praying, with uplifted hands,

*That some well-laden ship may strike the sands,
To whose rich cargo they may make pretence,
And fatten on the spoils of Providence :
So critics throng to see a new play split,
And thrive and prosper on the wrecks of wit.
Small hope our poet from these prospects draws ;
And therefore to the fair commends his cause.
Your tender hearts to mercy are inclin'd,
With whom he hopes this play will favour find,
Which was an off'ring to the sex design'd.*





WILLIAM KELLY as L. L. S. G. N. A. V.

'Yes, yes 'tis she'
'This little Cross' ... I know it by your marks.'

London: Published by W. Jones, N. 55, Finsbury Street.

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Dublin Published by W. Jones N° 26, Dame Street.



ZARA.

A

TRAGEDY.

BY AARON HILL, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

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M DCC XCI.



TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCE.

SIR,

WRITERS, who mean no Int'rest, but their Arts ;
Of undepending Minds, and stedfast Hearts,
Disclaiming Hopes will empty Forms neglect ;
Nor need PERMISSION—to address Respect.

Frank, as the manly Faith of ancient Time,
Let Truth, for once, approach the Great, in Rhyme!
Nor Public Benefit, misguided, stray,
Because a Private Wisher points its Way.

If wond'ring, here, your Greatness condescends
To ask, What's HE, who thus, uncall'd, attends ?
Smile, at a Suitor, who, in Courts, untrac'd,
Pleas'd, if o'erlook'd, thus owns his humble Taste.—

Vow'd an Unenvier of the busy Great ;
Too plain for Flatt'ry ; and, too calm for Hate :
Hid to be Happy ; who surveys, unknown,
The pow'rless Cottage, and the peaceless Throne ;
A silent Subject to His own Controul ;
Of active passions, but unyielding Soul ;

Engross'd by *NO Pursuits*, amus'd by *All* ;
But, deaf as *Adders*, to *Ambition's Call* :
Too Free, for *Pow'r*, (or *Prejudice*) to *WIN*,
And, safely lodging *Liberty* *WITHIN*.

Pardon, Great Prince! *th' unfashionable strain*,
That shuns to dedicate ; *nor seeks to gain* :
That (self-resigning) *knows no narrow View* ;
And but for Public Blessings, courts ev'n *YOU* !

Late a *bold Tracer* of your measur'd *Mind*,
 (*While*, by the mournful *SCENE*, to *Grief inclin'd*,)
I saw your Eloquence of Eyes confess
Soft Sense of BELVIDERA's deep Distress,
Prophetic thence, fore-deem'd the rising *Years* ;
And hail'd a HAPPY NATION in YOUR Tears !

Oh!—nobly touch'd!—*th' inspiring Pleasures choofe*,
Snatch from the fable Wave, the sinking *MUSE* !
Charming, be charm'd! the *Stage's Anguish* heal :
And teach a languid People how to feel.

Then *her full Soul shall TRAGIC Pow'r impart*,
And reach Three Kingdoms in their Prince's Heart !
Lightness, disclaim'd, shall blush *itself away* :
And reas'ning SENSE resume forgotten Sway.
Love, Courage, Loyalty, Taste, Honour, Truth,
Flash'd from the Scene, re-charm our *list'ning Youth* :
And, Virtues (by *YOUR Influence form'd*) *sustain*
The future Glories of their Founder's Reign.

DEDICATION.

*Nor let due Care of a protected Stage,
Misjudg'd Amusement, but spare Hours engage ;
Strong, serious TRUTHS, the manly Muse displays ;
And leads charm'd Reason through those flow'ry
Ways.*

*While HISTORY's cold Care but Facts inrolls,
The MUSE (persuasive) saves the pictur'd Souls !
Beyond all Egypt's GUMS, embalms Mankind :
And stamps the living Features of the Mind.*

*Time can eject the Sons of Pow'r, from Fame ;
And He, who gains a World, may LOSE his Name.
But cherish'd Arts insure immortal Breath :
And bid their prop'd Defenders tread on Death !*

*Look back, lov'd Prince! on Age's sunk in shade!
And feel, what DARKNESS absent Genius made!
Think on the dead Fore-fillers of your Place!
Think on the stern First-founders of your Race !
And, where lost Story sleeps in silent Night ;
Charge to their Want of Taste, their Want of LIGHT.*

*When, in your rising Grove, (no Converse nigh)
BLACK EDWARD's awful Bust demands your Eye,
Think, from what Cause blind Chronicles DEFAME
The gross-told Tow'rings of that dreadful Name !
Search him, thro' FANCY; And suppose him shown
By the long Glories to the MUSES known :
Shining, disclos'd :—o'ertrampling Death's Controul!
And, opening, backward, All his Depth of Soul!*

Then,—*breathe a conscious Sigh to mourn his Fate*
Who form'd no Writers, like his Spirit Great!
To limit his living Thoughts—past Fame renew;
And build Him Honours they reserve for You!

I am,

With profound Respect,

SIR,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

Most humble,

And obedient Servant,

A. HILL.

AARON HILL.

HE who can survey the recorded life of this gentleman, without exultation, must be dead to virtue; He, who is not proud of the lustre it reflects upon his species, feels nothing of the enthusiasm that warms into kindred excellence.

AARON HILL was a native of the Capital, and born in Beaufort-Buildings, Strand, on the 10th of February, 1684-5. Paternally, his exemplar was a bad one, for his father GEORGE HILL, Esq. was lavish and indiscreet, and the legal right to a property of 2000*l.* a year, which would have devolved upon him, his Father so involved as to render it of no value to the family.

THE young gentleman, however *now* unfortunate, was well gifted other ways; he was adorned by much mental power, and promptitude that carried that power to the best account—his mind was formed for enterprize, inventive and indefatigable. He had scarcely gone through Westminster,

and completed his 14th year, when he fought after fortune in other climes, and surely with a sufficient disregard of distance, for he undertook a voyage to *Constantinople*.—His expected advancement was baffled by a mean woman as far as was pecuniary, but the advancement in the best knowledge, the *savoir vivre*, he who mix'd so much with variety of character, and possess'd the mind of AARON HILL, could not but find a commodity readily convertible into wealth.

FEW men have been more multifarious in pursuit than this—For HE made *plays*, who could also make *Beech oil*. Among his struggles after pre-eminence he sought to rival the Russians in *Potashes*—and the Highlander first ventured down the Spey upon *Floats* at the suggestion and example of HILL.—He cut down forests of timber that JOHNSON could never have discovered, and shewed the English builder, that Scottish timber was perfectly applicable to ship-building.—He was occupied at once by the cultivation of the art of acting, and that of planting, and his imagination vibrated between South Carolina and the Theatre in the Haymarket.

HILL was one of those with whom POPE commenced a war, that dishonoured his great talents

—For something, or for nothing, he made HILL dive, and arise without spot from the mud of dulness; and the retort of HILL should be remembered as the keenest characteristic of POPE's literary life.

Tuneful ALXIS, on the Thames' fair side,
The ladies' *play-thing*, and the muses' pride,
With merit popular, with wit polite,
Easy though vain, and elegant though light,
Desiring and *deserving* others praise,
Poorly accepts a fame he ne'er repays :
Unborn to cherish, SNEAKINGLY APPROVES,
And wants the soul to *spread* the worth he *loves*.

I HAVE little more to add to this mention, but that in marriage he was happy, and he deserved his happiness;—he was studious, and his labour was not in vain; he attracted the love of man, and it is imagined lived strictly that life which he believed most acceptable to God.—Active usefulness attended him till he died, this happened in 1750. The shock of the great earthquake immediately preceded a shock to him fatal.

He died in his 65th year, and was interred in the same grave with his lady in Westminster Abbey. His dramatic pieces are the following:

<i>Elfrid</i>	-	-	1710	<i>Rinaldo</i>	-	-	1711
<i>Walking Statue</i>	-		1710	<i>Fatal Vision</i>	-		1716
<i>Trick upon Trick</i>	-			<i>Henry V.</i>	-		1723

<i>Atterwold</i>	-	1732	<i>Merlin in Love</i>	-	1759
<i>Zara</i>	-	1735	<i>Muses in Mourning</i>	-	1759
<i>Alzira</i>	-	1736	<i>Snake in the Grass</i>	-	1759
<i>Merope</i>	-	1749	<i>Saul</i>	-	
<i>Roman Revenge</i>	-	1753	<i>Daranes</i>	-	
<i>Infolvent</i>	-	1758	<i>Fatal Extravagance.</i>		

ZARA.

IF it were merely from the ground-work of the Piece that this Play should be estimated, much of our Admiration would abate—Religious Differences are now neither felt with that Horror, nor do they, thank Heaven, produce now the Miseries that Bigotry and Ignorance formerly originated.

BUT ZARA has other and strong Claims—from the natural delineation of the Passions. M. VOLTAIRE was the Original Author, but even his Play is an *English* one, and the French Stage grew animated by the Transfusion of the manly Energy of Shakspeare. The present is obviously an elegant liberal Translation from the ZAIRE of Voltaire, with some trivial Alterations of Names and Sentiments.

In this Piece Mrs. CIBBER made her Theatrical début in the Character of Zara.

PREFACE
TO THE READER.

THE Beauties of *Nature* will be Beauties *everlastingly*.—If they are, sometimes, *eclipsed* by a Cloud of ill Accidents, they *disperse* the dark *Screen*; and, again, become amiable.

BUT, unwilling to suppose, we are, *now*, under Influence of such a *Cloud*, with regard to *Dramatical Taste*, I thought it more decent, (and *juster*) to charge its Degeneracy to the *STAGE*, than to the *Genius* of the Nation.

ACCOUNTING in this Manner for the *Defect*, I have often taken Pleasure, (when turning my Search towards a *Remedy*) to consider it, as no improbable Hope, that *YOUNG Actors* and *Actresses*, beginning, *unseduced* by *AFFECTED EXAMPLES*, might go some Length, towards what has been said of a celebrated Writer—

“ *Who reach’d Perfection, in his first Essay.*”

IT required, methought, but the Assistance of a lively *Imagination*, joined to an easy, and natural *Power*; with a resolute *Habitude*, to BE, for an Hour or two, the very Persons they would *seem*.—Such a *Foundation* for accomplished *Acting*, lies so open, and so clearly in *Nature*, that they, who find it at all, *must* discover it at *first*: Because, when Men are once got out

of the Road, they, who travel the *farthest*, have but most Length of Way to ride *back* again.

YET, the Interested in Playhouses were so positive in the contrary Sentiment, that they submitted to reverence, as a *Maxim*, this extraordinary Concession, "That *Actors must be twenty Years such, before they can expect to be Masters of the Air, and Tread of the Stage.*"

Now, there is but *one* View, in Nature, wherein I was willing to admit of this Argument: I was forced to *confess*, I had seen some *particular* Stage Airs, and Stage Treads, which a Man of good Sense *might*, indeed, waste a long Life, in endeavouring to imitate, and, *at last, lose his Labour*!

HOWEVER, since an Opinion, in Opposition to these Gentlemen's, wanted Weight to make That believed *possible*, which had not, yet, been reduced into *Practice*, I took a sudden Resolution, actually to try, *Who was in the Right*, by attempting the EXPERIMENT.—This, I know, was a design, which, succeeding, would not fail to give Pleasure to the *Public*; and, which, *miscarrying*, could produce no worse Consequence, than my particular Mortification.

I imagined it reasonable to found a Trial, of this Nature, rather on a *New* Play, than an *Old* one: And, as it ought to be a Play of unquestionable *Merit*, it must have been Presumption, and Vanity, to have cast a Thought toward any Thing, *of my own*—Upon the Whole, that I might keep out of the Reach either of Prejudice, or Partiality, a *Foreign* Production seemed the properest Choice; and the *ZAIRE*, of *Monsieur*

de Voltaire, offered me every thing that Nature could do, on the Part of the *Poet*: But, I had still something to *wish*, with regard to that *other* Part of her Influence, which depended on the *Player*.

I had (of late) among the rest of the Town, been deprived of all rational Pleasure from the Theatre, by a monstrous and unmoving *Affectation*: Which, choaking up the Avenues to *Passion*, had made *Tragedy* FORBIDDING, and HORRIBLE!

I was despairing to see a *Correction* of this Folly; when I found myself unexpectedly re-animated, by the War which the PROMPTER has proclaimed, and is now weekly waging against the *Ranters* and *Whiners* of the Theatre; after having undertaken to reduce the *Art*'s *lost Art*, into PRINCIPLES, with Design, by reconciling them to the touching and spirited *Medium*, to reform those *wild Copies* of Life, into some *Resemblance* at least of their *Originals*.

Thus, confirmed in my Sentiments, I ventured on the *Cast* of two *Capital* Characters, into Hands, *not disabled*, by Custom and obstinate Prejudice, from pursuing the *Plain Track* of NATURE.

It was easy to induce OSMAN, (as he is a Relation of my own, and *but too fond* of the Amusement,) to make Trial how far his Delight in an Art I shall never allow him to *practise*, might enable him to supply one Part of the Proof, that, to *imitate Nature*, we must proceed upon *Natural Principles*.

At the same Time, it happened, that Mrs. CIBBER was fortunately inclinable to exert her inimitable Ta-

lents, in *additional* Aid of my Purpose, with View to *continue* the *Practice* of a Profession, for which her *Person*, her *Voice*, the unaffected *Sensibility* of her *Heart*, (and her *Face*, so finely disposed for *assuming* and *expressing* the *PASSIONS*) have so naturally qualified her.

AND, to give this bold *Novelty of Design* all its necessary Furtherance, Mr. FLEETWOOD, who professes the most generous Inclinations for *Improvement* of his troublesome Province, very willingly *concurred* in whatever could, on *his* Part, be of Use to the *Experiment*.

BEHOLD, in this little *Detail*, from *what Motive* I have taken upon me to throw one of the finest of *French Plays* upon the Public.—If my *Expectations* are not strangely *deceived*, it will be found, by the *Event*, whether our *Taste* for true Tragedy is *declined*, or the true *Art* of *acting* it *forgotten*.

FROM the *First* I can have nothing to conclude, but that my Judgment has been *weak*, and *mistaken*.

BUT, if the *Last* proves the Case, I shall flatter myself, that those Persons of Quality, from whose *imaginary Want of Discernment* some People have not *blushed* to DERIVE their *dull Qualities*, will, in Right of their *insulted Understanding*, EXACT, for the future, a warm and toilsome Exertion, of the *Strong* and the *Natural*, though at the COST of the *Lazy* and *Affected*.

THIS would awaken, at once, the *Reflection* of many, who have it in their POWER to be moving, and natural Actors; and, by effectually *convincing* them, that their present Opinion is *wrong*, bring 'em over (for their own, and the Public Advantage) to embrace and succeed by a *New* one.

SUCH a Step towards *reforming* the Theatre, would draw on, (as a Consequence) many of its *nobler* Improvements—For, where *Emotions* are keenest, the *Delight* becomes greatest; and to whatever *most charms*, we most closely *adhere*, and encourage it *most actively*.

IF, in translating this excellent Tragedy, I have regarded in some Places the *Soul*, and in others the *Letter* of the Original, *Monsieur de Voltaire*, who has made himself a very capable *Judge* both of our *Language* and *Customs*, will indulge me that Latitude; except he should, in observing some *Alterations* I have made, in his Names and his *Diſtion*, forget that their *Motives* are to be found in the Turn of our National *Difference*.

After what I have said of the Playhouses, it would be Injustice not to *declare*, that I exclude from the Censure of speaking or acting *unnaturally*, any one of the Persons who have been cast into ZARA—And in particular, I must say *This* of TWO of them; that *Mr. MILWARD*, who is already a very *excellent*, and hourly rising to be an *accomplished* Actor, has a VOICE that both comprehends, and expresses, *the utmost Compass* of HARMONY.—And *Mr. CIBBER* discerningly pursued through the numberless *Extent* of his *Walks*, is an Actor of as *unlimited a Compass* of GENIUS, as ever I saw on the Stage; and is *barely* received, as he *deserves*, when the Town is *most favourable*.

PROLOGUE.

*THE French, howe'er mercurial they may seem,
Extinguish half their fire, by critic phlegm :
While English Writers Nature's Freedom claim,
And warm their scenes with an ungovern'd flame :
'Tis strange that Nature never should inspire
A Racine's judgment with a Shakspeare's fire !*

*Howe'er to-night—(to promise much we're loth)
But—you've a chance, to have a taste of both.
From English plays, Zara's French author fir'd,
Confess'd his muse beyond herself, inspir'd ;
From rack'd Othello's rage he rais'd his style,
And snatch'd the brand that lights this tragic pile :
Zara's success his utmost hopes outflaw,
And a twice twentieth weeping audience drew.*

*As for our English friend, he leaves to you,
Whate'er may seem to his performance due ;
No views of gain his hopes or fears engage,
He gives a child of leisure to the stage ;
Willing to try, if yet, forsaken Nature,
Can charm, with any one remember'd feature.*

*Thus far, the author speaks—but now, the player,
With trembling Heart, prefers his humble prayer.
To-night, the greatest venture of my life,
Is lost or sav'd, as you receive—a wife :*

*If time, you think, may ripen her to merit,
With gentle smiles, support her wav'ring spirit.
Zara in France, at once an address rais'd,
Warm'd into skill, by being kindly prais'd :
O ! could such wonders here from favour flow,
How would our Zara's heart with transport glow !
But she, alas ! by juster fears oppress'd,
Begs but your bare endurance, at the best,
Her unskill'd tongue would simple Nature speak,
Nor dares her bounds, for false applauses break.
Amidst a thousand faults, her best pretence
To please——is unpresuming innocence.
When a chaste heart's distress your grief demands,
One silent tear outweighs a thousand hands,
If she conveys the pleasing passions RIGHT,
Guard and support her, this decisive night ;
If she MISTAKES—or, finds her strength too small,
Let interposing pity——break her fall.
In you it rests, to save her, or destroy,
If she draws tears from You, I weep—for JOY.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

OSMAN, <i>Sultan of Jerusalem,</i>	-	Mr. Kemble.
LUSIGNAN, <i>last of the blood of the Christian kings</i>	-	
of <i>Jerusalem,</i>	-	Mr. Bensley.
NERESTAN, } <i>French officers,</i>	-	Mr. Barrymore.
CHATILLON, }	-	Mr. Aickin.
ORASMIN, <i>Minister to the Sultan,</i>	-	Mr. Packer.
MELIEOR, <i>an officer of the Seraglio,</i>	-	Mr. Phillimore.

Women.

ZARA, }	-	Miss Kemble.
SELIMA, } <i>Slaves to the Sultan,</i>	-	Mrs. Ward.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

OSMAN, <i>Sultan of Jerusalem,</i>	-	Mr. Wroughton.
LUSIGNAN, <i>last of the blood of the Christian kings</i>	-	
of <i>Jerusalem,</i>	-	Mr. Henderson.
NERESTAN, } <i>French officers,</i>	-	Mr. Davies.
CHATILLON, }	-	Mr. Hull.
ORASMIN, <i>Minister to the Sultan,</i>	-	Mr. Fearon.
MELIDOR, <i>an officer of the Seraglio,</i>	-	Mr. Thompson.

Women.

ZARA, }	-	Mrs. Pope.
SELIMA, } <i>Slaves to the Sultan,</i>	-	Mrs. Inchbald.

* These were the *Dramatis Personæ* the last time of performing this Piece.

ZARA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

ZARA and SELIMA.

Selima.

It moves my wonder, young and beauteous Zara,
Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart !
Your peace of mind increaseth with your charms ;
Tears now no longer shade your eyes soft lustre :
You meditate no more those happy climes
To which Nereftan will return to guide you.
You talk no more of that gay nation now,
Where men adore their wives, and woman's power
Draws rev'rence from a polish'd people's softness :
Their husbands' equals, and their lovers' queens !
Free without scandal ; wise without restraint ;
" Their virtue due to nature, not to fear."
Why have you ceas'd to wish this happy change ?
A barr'd seraglio !—sad, unsocial life !

Scorn'd, and a slave ! All this has lost its terror ;
And Syria rivals, now, the banks of Seine !

Zar. Joys which we do not know, we do not
wish.

My fate's bound in by Sion's sacred wall ;
Clos'd from my infancy within this palace,
Custom has learnt, from time, the power to please.
I claim no share in the remoter world, 21
The sultan's property, his will my law ;
Unknowing all but him, his power, his fame ;
To live his subject is my only hope.
All else, an empty dream.—

Sel. Have you forgot
Absent Nerektan then ? whose gen'rous friendship
So nobly vow'd redemption from your chains !
How oft have you admir'd his dauntless soul !
Osman, his conqueror, by his courage charm'd,
Trusted his faith, and on his word releas'd him :
Tho' not return'd in time—we yet expect him.
Nor had his noble journey other motive,
Than to procure our ransom.—And is this,
This dear, warm hope, become an idle dream ?

Zar. Since after two long years he not returns,
'Tis plain his promise stretch'd beyond his power.
A stranger and a slave, unknown, like him,
Proposing much, means little ;—talks and vows,
Delighted with a prospect of escape :— 40
He promis'd to redeem ten Christians more,
And free us all from slavery !—I own
I once admir'd the unprofitable zeal,
But now it charms no longer.—

Sel. What if yet,
He, faithful should return, and hold his vow ;
Would you not, then——

Zar. No matter—Time is past,
And every thing is chang'd——

Sel. But, whence comes this ?

Zar. Go—'twere too much to tell thee Zara's
fate :

The sultan's secrets, all, are sacred here :
But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.
Some three months past, when thou, and other slaves,
Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank ;
Heav'n, to cut short the anguish of my days,
Rais'd me to comfort by a pow'ful hand :
This mighty Osman !——

Sel. What of him ?

Zar. This sultan,
This conqueror of the Christians, loves——

60

Sel. Whom ?

Zar. Zara !——

Thou blushest, and I guess thy thoughts accuse me ?
But, know me better——'twas unjust suspicion.
All emperor as he is, I cannot stoop
To honours, that bring shame and baseness with 'em ;
Reason and pride, those props of modesty,
Sustain my guarded heart, and strengthen virtue ;
“ Rather than sink to infamy, let chains
“ Embrace me with a joy, such love denies :”
No——I shall now astonish thee ;——his greatness
Submits to own a pure and honest flame.
Among the shining crowds, which live to please him,
His whole regard is fix'd on me alone :

He offers marriage ; and its rites now wait
To crown me empress of this eastern world.

Sel. Your virtue and your charms deserve it all :
My heart is not surpris'd, but struck to hear it.
If to be empress can complete your happiness, 80
I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves.

Zar. Be still my equal—and enjoy my blessings;
For, thou partaking, they will bless me more.

Sel. Alas ! but Heaven ! will it permit this marriage ?

Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliss,
Plant bitterness, and root it in your heart ?
Have you forgot you are of Christian blood ?

Zar. Ah me ! What hast thou said, why wouldst
thou thus

Recall my wav'ring thoughts ? How know I, what,
Or whence I am ? Heaven kept it hid in darkness,
Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood.

Sel. Nereftan, who was born a Christian, here,
Asserts, that you, like him, had Christian parents ;
Besides—that cross, which, from your infant years
Has been preserv'd, was found upon your bosom,
As if design'd by Heaven, a pledge of faith
Due to the God you purpose to forsake !

Zar. Can my fond heart, on such a feeble proof,
Embrace a faith, abhorr'd by him I love ?
I see too plainly custom forms us all ? 100
Our thoughts, our morals, our most fix'd belief,
Are consequences of our place of birth :
Born beyond Ganges, I had been a Pagan,
In France a Christian, I am here a Saracen :
'Tis but instruction, all ! Our parents' hand

Writes on our heart the first faint characters,
Which time, re-tracing, deepens into strength,
That nothing can efface, but death or Heaven!—
Thou wer't not made a pris'ner in this place,
'Till after reason, borrowing force from years,
Had lent its lustre to enlighten faith :—
For me, who in my cradle was their slave,
Thy Christian doctrines were too lately taught me :
Yet, far from having lost the rev'rence due,
This cross, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes thro' my heart a kind of awful fear !
I honour, from my soul, the Christian laws,
Those laws, which, softening nature by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood ;—no doubt
Christians are happy ; and 'tis just to love them. 120

Sel. Why have you, then, declar'd yourself their
foe ?

Why will you join your hand with this proud Os-
man's ?

Who owes his triumph to the Christians' ruin !

Zar. Ah!—who could slight the offer of his heart?
Nay ;—for I mean to tell thee all my weakness ;
Perhaps I had, ere now, profess'd thy faith,
But Osman lov'd me—and I've lost it all :—
I think on none but Osman—my pleas'd heart,
Fill'd with the blessing, to be lov'd by him,
Wants room for other happiness. “ Place thou
“ Before thy eyes, his merit and his fame,
“ His youth, yet blooming but in manhood's dawn ;
“ How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his pow'r !
“ Think, too, how lovely ! how his brow becomes
“ This wreath of early glories !”—Oh, my friend !

I talk not of a sceptre, which he gives me :

No—to be charm'd with that were thanks too humble !

Offensive tribute, and too poor for love !

'Twas Osman won my heart, not Osman's crown :

I love not in him aught besides himself. 140

Thou think'st, perhaps, that these are starts of passion :

But, had the will of Heav'n less bent to bless him,

Doom'd Osman to my chains, and me to fill

The throne that Osman sits on—ruin and wretchedness

Catch and consume my wishes, but I would—

To raise me to myself, descend to him.

“ *Sel.* Hark ! the wish'd music sounds—'Tis he—
he comes— [Exit Selima.

“ *Zar.* My heart prevented him, and found him
near :

“ Absent two whole long days, the slow-pac'd hour

“ At last is come, and gives him to my wishes !”

[A grand march.

*Enter OSMAN, reading a paper, which he re-delivers to
ORASMIN ; with Attendants.*

Osman. Wait my return—or, should there be a cause
That may require my presence, do not fear

To enter ; ever mindful, that my own

[Exit Oras. &c.

Follows my people's happiness.—At length,

Cares have releas'd my heart—to love and Zara.

Zar. 'Twas not in cruel absence, to deprive me

Of your imperial image—every where

You reign triumphant : memory supplies

Reflexion with your power ; and you, like Heaven,
Are always present—and are always gracious. 160

Osm. The Sultans, my great ancestors, bequeath'd
 Their empire to me, but their taste they gave not ;
 Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not me :
 I know our prophet smiles on am'rous wishes,
 And opens a wide field to vast desire ;
 I know, that at my will I might possess ;
 That, wasting tenderness in wild profusion,
 I might look down to my surrounded feet,
 And bless contending beauties. I might speak,
 Serenely slothful, from within my palace,
 And bid my pleasure be my people's law.
 But, sweet as softness is, its end is cruel ;
 I can look round, and count a hundred kings,
 Unconquer'd by themselves, and slaves to others :
 Hence was Jerusalem to Christians lost ;
 " But Heaven, to blast that unbelieving race,
 " Taught me to be a king, by thinking like one."
 Hence from the distant Euxine to the Nile,
 The trumpet's voice has wak'd the world to war ;
 Yet, amidst arms and death, thy power has reach'd
 me ;

180

For thou disdain'st, like me, a languid love ;
 Glory and Zara join—and charm together.

Zar. I hear at once, with blushes and with joy,
 This passion, so unlike your country's customs.

Osm. Passion, like mine, disdains my country's cus-
 toms ;

The jealousy, the faintness, the distrust,
 The proud, superior coldness of the east.
 I know to love you, Zara, with esteem ;
 To trust your virtue, and to court your soul.
Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,

And dare inform you, that, 'tis all your own :
 My joys must all be yours ; only my cares
 Shall lie conceal'd within—and reach not Zara.

Zar. Oblig'd by this excess of tenderness,
 How low, how wretched was the lot of Zara !
 Too poor with aught, but thanks, to pay such blessings !

Ofm. Not so—I love—and would be lov'd again ;
 Let me confess it, I possess a soul,
 That what it wishes, wishes ardently.
 I should believe you hated, had you power 200
 To love with moderation : 'tis my aim,
 In every thing, to reach supreme perfection.
 If, with an equal flame, I touch your heart,
 Marriage attends your smile—But know, 'twill make
 Me wretched, if it makes not Zara happy.

Zar. Ah, sir ! if such a heart as gen'rous Osman's
 Can, from my will, submit to take its bliss,
 What mortal ever was decreed so happy !
 Pardon the pride, with which I own my joy ;
 Thus wholly to possess the man I love !
 To know, and to confess his will my fate !
 To be the happy work of his dear hands !
 To be—

Enter ORASMIN.

Ofm. Already interrupted ! What ?
 Who ?—Whence ?

Oras. This moment ? sir, there is arriv'd
 That Christian slave, who, licens'd on his faith,
 Went hence to France—and, now return'd, prays
 audience.

Zar. [*Aside.*] Oh, Heaven ! 219

Osm. Admit him—What?—Why comes he not?

Oras. He waits without. No Christian dares approach

This place, long sacred to the Sultan's privacies.

Osm. Go—bring him with thee—monarchs, like the sun,

Shine but in vain, unwaring, if unseen;

With forms and reverence, let the great approach us;

Not the unhappy;—every place alike,

Gives the distressed a privilege to enter——

[*Exit Oras.*]

I think with horror on these dreadful maxims,

Which harden kings insensibly to tyrants.

Re-enter ORASMIN with NERESTAN.

Ner. Imperial Sultan! honour'd, ev'n by foes!

See me return'd, regardful of my vow,

And punctual to discharge a Christian's duty.

I bring the ransom of the captive Zara,

Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,

And of ten Christian captives, pris'ners here.

You promis'd, Sultan, if I should return,

To grant their rated liberty:—Behold,

I am return'd, and they are yours no more.

I would have stretch'd my purpose to myself,

But fortune has deny'd it; my poor all

Suffic'd no further, and a noble poverty

Is now my whole possession.—I redeem

The promis'd Christians; for I taught 'em hope:

But, for myself, I come again your slave,

To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Ofm. Christian ! I must confess thy courage charms me ?

But let thy pride be taught, it treads too high,
When it presumes to climb above my mercy.
Go ransomless thyself, and carry back
Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,
Fit to reward thy purpose ; instead of ten,
Demand a hundred Christians ; they are thine :
Take 'em, and bid 'em teach their haughty country,
They left some virtue among Saracens.—

Be Lusignan alone excepted—He
Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay claim
To my Jerusalem—that claim, his guilt !

“ Such is the law of states ; had I been vanquish'd,
“ Thus had he said of me.” I mourn his lot,
Who must in fetters, lost to day-light, pine, 260
And sigh away old age in grief and pain.

For Zara—but to name her as a captive,
Were to dishonour language ;—she's a prize
Above thy purchase :—all the Christian realms,
With all their kings to guide 'em, would unite
In vain, to force her from me—Go, retire—

Ner. For Zara's ransom, with her own consent,
I had your royal word. For Lusignan—
Unhappy, poor, old man——

Ofm. Was I not heard ?
Have I not told thee, Christian, all my will ?
What if I prais'd thee !—This presumptuous virtue,
Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride ;
Be gone—and when to-morrow's sun shall rise
On my dominions, be not found—too near me.

[*Exit Nerestan.*]

Zar. [*Aside.*] Assist him, Heaven!

Osm. Zara, retire a moment—

Assume, throughout my palace, sovereign empire,
While I give orders to prepare the pomp
That waits to crown thee mistress of my throne 280

[*Leads her out, and returns.*]

Orafin! didst thou mark th' imperious slave?
What could he mean?—he sigh'd—and, as he went,
Turn'd and look'd back at Zara!—didst thou mark it?

Ora. Alas! my sovereign master! let not jealousy
Strike high enough to reach your noble heart.

Osm. Jealousy, said'st thou? I disdain it:—No!

Distrust is poor; and a misplac'd suspicion

Invites and justifies the falsehood fear'd.—

Yet, as I love with warmth—so, I could hate!

But Zara is above disguise and art:—

“My love is stronger, nobler, than my power.”

Jealous!—I was not jealous!—If I was,

I am not—no—my heart—but, let us drown

Remembrance of the word, and of the image:

My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.—

Go, and prepare for the approaching nuptials.

“Zara to careful empire joins delight.”

I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,

Then, all the smiling day is love and Zara's.

Exit Orafin.

Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery press'd, 300

In proud, unsocial misery, unblest'd,

Wou'd, but for love's soft influence, curse their
throne,

And, among crowded millions, live alone. *Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

NERSTAN, CHATILLON.

Chatillon.

MATCHLESS Nereftan! generous and great!
You, who have broke the chains of hopelefs slaves!
“ You, Christian faviour! by a Saviour fent!”
Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight;
The grateful weepers wait to clasp your knees,
They throng to kifs the happy hand that fav’d ’em:
Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
And, at their head, command their hearts for ever.

Ner. Illuftrious Chatillon! this praife o’erwhelms
me;

What have I done beyond a Christian’s duty;
Beyond what you would, in my place, have done?

Chat. True—it is every honeft Christian’s duty;
Nay, ’tis the bleffing of fuch minds as ours,
For others’ good to facrifice our own.—
Yet, happy they, to whom Heav’n grants the power,
To execute, like you, that duty’s call!
For us—the relicks of abandon’d war,
Forgot in France, and, in Jerufalem,
Left to grow old in fetters,—Osman’s father
Confin’d us to the gloom of a damp dungeon, 20
Where, but for you, we muft have groan’d out life,
And native France have blefs’d our eyes no more.

Ner. The will of gracious Heav’n, that foften’d
Osman,

Inspir'd me for your sakes :—But, with our joy,
Flows, mix'd, a bitter sadness—I had hop'd
To save from their perversion, a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,
Was made a slave by cruel Noradin ;
When, sprinkling Syria with the blood of Christians,
Cæsarea's walls saw Lusignan surpriz'd,
And the proud crescent rise in bloody triumph.
From this seraglio having young escap'd,
Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my chains ;
Then, sent to Paris on my plighted faith,
I flatter'd my fond hope with vain resolves,
To guide the lovely Zara to that court
Where Lewis has establish'd virtue's throne :
But Osman will detain her—yet, not Osman ;
Zara herself forgets she is a Christian,
And loves the tyrant Sultan !—Let that pass : 40
I mourn a disappointment still more cruel ;
The prop of all our Christian hope is lost !

Chat. Dispose me at your will—I am your own.

Ner. Oh, Sir, great Lusignan, so long their captive,

That last of an heroic race of kings !

That warrior, whose past fame has fill'd the world !

Osman refuses to my sighs for ever !

Chat. Nay, then we have been all redeem'd in vain ;

Perish that soldier who would quit his chains,

And leave his noble chief behind in fetters.

Alas ! you know him not as I have known him ;

Thank Heav'n, that plac'd your birth so far remov'd

From those detested days of blood and woe :
 But I, less happy, was condemned to see
 Thy walls, Jerusalem, beat down—and all
 Our pious fathers' labours lost in ruins !
 Heav'n ! had you seen the very temple rifled !
 The sacred sepulchre itself profan'd !
 Fathers with children mingled, flame together !
 And our last king, oppress'd with age and arms, 60
 Murder'd, and bleeding o'er his murder'd sons !
 Then Lusignan, sole remnant of his race,
 Rallying our fated few amidst the flames,
 Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
 The conquerors and the conquer'd, groans and death !
 Dreadful—and, waving in his hand his sword,
 Red with the blood of infidels, cry'd out,
 This way, ye faithful Christians ! follow me.—

Ner. How full of glory was that brave retreat !

Chat. 'Twas Heav'n, no doubt, that sav'd and led
 him on ;

Pointed his path, and march'd our guardian guide :
 We reach'd Cæsarea—there the general voice
 Chose Lusignan, thenceforth to give us laws ;
 Alas ! 'twas vain—Cæsarea could not stand
 When Sion's self was fallen !—we were betray'd ;
 And Lusignan condemn'd, to length of life,
 In chains, in damps, and darkness, and despair :
 " Yet great, amidst his miseries, he look'd,
 " As if he could not feel his fate himself,
 " But as it reach'd his followers. And shall we, 80
 " For whom our gen'rous leader suffer'd this,
 " Be vilely safe, and dare be blest'd without him ?"

Ner. Oh! I should hate the liberty he shar'd not.
I knew too well the miseries you describe,
For I was born amidst them. Chains and death,
Cæsarea lost, and Saracens triumphant,
Were the first objects which my eyes e'er look'd on.
Hurried, an infant, among other infants,
Snatch'd from the bosoms of their bleeding mothers,
A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceas'd ;
Then were we sent to this ill fated city,
Here, in the palace of our former kings,
To learn, from Saracens, their hated faith,
And be completely wretched.—Zara, too,
Shar'd this captivity ; we both grew up
So near each other, that a tender friendship
Endear'd her to my wishes : My fond heart—
Pardon its weakness, bleeds to see her lost,
And, for a barb'rous tyrant, quit her God !

Chat. Such is the Saracens', too fatal, policy ! 100
Watchful seducers, still, of infant weakness :
“ Happy that you so young escap'd their hands ! ”
But let us think—May not this Zara's int'rest,
Loving the Sultan, and by him below'd,
For Lusignan procure some softer sentence ?
“ The wise and just, with innocence, may draw
“ Their own advantage from the guilt of others.”

Ner. How shall I gain admission to her presence ?
Osman has banish'd me—but that's a trifle ;
Will the seraglio's portals open to me ?
Or, could I find that easy to my hopes,
What prospect of success from an apostate ?
On whom I cannot look without disdain ;

“ And who will read her shame upon my brow.”

The hardest trial of a generous mind
Is, to court favours from a hand it scorns.

Chat. Think it is Lusignan we seek to serve.

Ner. Well—it shall be attempted—Hark! who’s
this?

Are my eyes false; or, is it really she?

Enter ZARA.

Zar. Start not, my worthy friend! I come to
seek you; 120

The Sultan has permitted it; fear nothing:—
But to confirm my heart which trembles near you,
Soften that angry air, nor look reproach;
Why should we fear each other, both mistaking?
Associates from our birth, one prison held us,
One friendship taught affliction to be calm,
’Till Heav’n thought fit to favour your escape,
And call you to the fields of happier France;
Thence, once again, it was my lot to find you
A pris’ner here; where, hid amongst a crowd
Of undistinguish’d slaves, with less restraint,
I shar’d your frequent converse;—
It pleas’d your pity, shall I say your friendship?
Or rather, shall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpose, to redeem
Distressful Zara—you procur’d my ransom,
And with a greatness that out-soar’d a crown,
Return’d yourself a slave, to give me freedom;
But Heav’n has cast our fate for different climes:
Here, in Jerusalem, I fix for ever; 125

Yet, among all the shine that marks my fortune,
I shall with frequent tears remember yours ;
Your goodness will for ever sooth my heart,
And keep your image still a dweller there :
Warm'd by your great example to protect
That faith, that lifts humanity so high,
I'll be a mother to distressed Christians.

Ner. How !—You protect the Christians ! you,
who can

Abjure their saving truth, and coldly see
Great Lusignan, their chief, die slow in chains !

Zar. To bring him freedom you behold me here ;
You will this moment meet his eyes in joy.

Chat. Shall I then live to bless that happy hour ?

Ner. Can Christians owe so dear a gift to Zara ?

Zar. Hopeless I gathered courage to intreat
The Sultan for his liberty—amaz'd,
So soon to gain the happiness I wish'd !
See where they bring the good old chief grown dim
With age, by pain and sorrows hasten'd on !

Chat. How is my heart dissolv'd with sudden joy !

“ *Zar.* I long to view his venerable face,

“ But tears, I know not why, eclipse my sight.

“ I feel, methinks, redoubled pity for him ;

“ But, I, alas ! myself have been a slave ;

“ And when we pity woes which we have felt,

“ 'Tis but a partial virtue !

“ *Ner.* Amazement !—Whence this greatness in an
infidel !”

Enter LUSIGNAN led in by two Guards.

Lus. Where am I? From the dungeon's depth
what voice

Has call'd me to revisit long-lost day?

Am I with Christians?—I am weak—forgive me,
And guide my trembling steps. I'm full of years;
My miseries have worn me more than age.

Am I in truth at liberty? *[Seating himself.]*

Chat. You are;

And every Christian's grief takes end with yours.

Lus. O, light! O, dearer far than light, that
voice!

Chatillon, is it you? my fellow martyr!

And shall our wretchedness, indeed, have end?

In what place are we now:—my feeble eyes,
Disus'd to day-light, long in vain to find you. 180

Chat. This was the palace of your royal fathers:
'Tis now the son of Noradin's seraglio.

Zar. The master of this place—the mighty Osman,
Distinguishes, and loves to cherish virtue.

This gen'rous Frenchman, yet a stranger to you,
Drawn from his native soil, from peace and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten Christian slaves,
Himself contented to remain a captive:

But Osman, charm'd by greatness like his own,
To equal what he loved, has giv'n him you.

Lus. So gen'rous France inspires her social sons!

They have been ever dear and useful to me—

Would I were nearer to him—Noble Sir,
[Nerestan approaches.]

How have I merited, that you for me
Should pass such distant seas, to bring me blessings,
And hazard your own safety for my sake?

Ner. My name, Sir, is Nerestan; born in Syria,
I wore the chains of slavery from my birth;
Till quitting the proud crescent for the court 200
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye
I learnt the trade of arms:—the rank I held
Was but the kind distinction which he gave me,
To tempt my courage to deserve regard.
Your sight, unhappy prince, would charm his eyes;
That best and greatest monarch will behold
With grief and joy those venerable wounds,
And print embraces where your fetters bound you.
All Paris will revere the cross's martyr;
“Paris, the refuge still of ruin'd kings!”

Lus. Alas! in times long past, I've seen its glory:
When Philip the victorious liv'd, I fought
A-breast with Montmorency and Melun,
D'Estaing, De Neile, and the far-famous Courcy:—
Names which were then the praise and dread of war!
But what have I to do at Paris now?
I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way my journey lies—to find, I hope,
The King of Kings, and ask the recompence.
For all my woes, long-suffer'd for his sake—
You gen'rous witnesses of my last hour, 220
While I yet live, assist my humble prayers,
And join the resignation of my soul.
Nerestan!—Chatillon!—and you, fair mourner!
Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows!
Pity a father, the unhappiest sire

That ever felt the hand of angry heaven !
My eyes, though dying, still can furnish tears ;
Half my long life they flow'd, and still will flow !
A daughter and three sons, my heart's proud hopes,
Were all torn from me in their tend'rest years—
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remember—

Chat. Would I were able to forget your woe.

Lus. Thou wert a pris'ner with me in Cæsarea,
And there beheld'st my wife and two dear sons
Perish in flames.

Chat A captive and in fetters,
I could not help 'em.

Lus. I know thou couldst not—
Oh, 'twas a dreadful scene ! these eyes beheld it.—
Husband and father, helpless I beheld it.—
Deny'd the mournful privilege to die !
Oh, my poor children ! whom I now deplore ;
If ye are faints in Heav'n, as sure ye are,
Look with an eye of pity on that brother,
That sister whom you left !—If I have yet,
Or son or daughter—for in early chains,
Far from their lost and unassisting father,
I heard that they were sent, with numbers more,
To this seraglio ; hence to be dispers'd
In nameless remnants o'er the east, and spread
Our Christian miseries round a faithless world.

Chat. 'Twas true,—For in the horrors of that day,
I snatch'd your infant daughter from her cradle ;
“ But finding ev'ry hope of flight was vain,
“ Scarce had I sprinkled, from a public fountain,
“ Those sacred drops which wash the soul from sin,”
When from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens

Forc'd the lost innocent, who smiling lay,
And pointed, playful, at the swarthy spoilers !
With her, your youngest, then your only son, 260
Whose little life had reach'd the fourth sad year,
And just giv'n sense to feel his own misfortunes,
Was order'd to this city.

Ner. I, too, hither,
Just at that fatal age, from lost Caesarea,
Came in that crowd of undistinguish'd Christians.—

Lus. You!—came you thence?—Alas! who knows
but you
Might heretofore have seen my two poor children.
[*Looking up.*] Hah, Madam! that small ornament
you wear,

Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been yours ?

Zar. From my first birth, Sir—
Ah, what! you seem surpriz'd!—why should this
move you ?

Lus. Would you confide it to my trembling hands?

Zar. To what new wonders am I now reserv'd ?
Oh, Sir! what mean you !

Lus. Providence and Heaven !
Oh, failing eyes, deceive ye not my hope ?
Can this be possible?—Yes, yes—'tis she !
This little cross—I know it, by sure marks ! 280

Oh! take me, Heav'n! while I can die with joy—

Zar. Oh, do not, Sir, distract me!—rising thoughts,
And hopes, and fears, o'erwhelm me !

Lus. Tell me, yet,
Has it remain'd for ever in your hands ?
What—both brought captives from Caesarea hither ?

Zar. Both, both—

“ Oh, heaven ! have I then found a father ? ”

Lus. Their voice ! their looks !

The living images of their dear mother !

O God ! who see’st my tears, and know’st my
thoughts

Do not forsake me at this dawn of hope——

Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.

Madam ! Nereftan !—Help me, Chatillon ! [*Rising.*

Nereftan, hast thou on thy breast a scar,

Which ere Cæsarea fell, from a fierce hand,

Surprizing us by night, my child receiv’d ?

Ner. Bless’d hand !—I bear it,—Sir, the mark is
there !

Lus. Merciful heaven !

Ner. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, Sir !—Oh, Zara, kneel.—

Zar. [*Kneeling*] My father !—Oh !—— 301

Lus. Oh, my lost children !

Both. Oh !

Lus. My son ! my daughter ! lost in embracing
you,

I would now die, lest this should prove a dream.

Chat. How touch’d is my glad heart, to see their
joy !

Lus. They shall not tear you from my arms—my
children !

Again, I find you—dear in wretchedness :

Oh, my brave son—and thou my nameless daughter !

Now dissipate all doubt, remove all dread,

Has Heaven, that gives me back my children—giv’n
’em,

Such as I lost ’em ?—Come they Christians to me ?

One weeps and one declines a conscious eye !
Your silence speaks—too well I understand it.

Zar. I cannot, Sir, deceive you—Osman's laws
Were mine—and Osman is not Christian.—

Lus. Her words are thunder bursting on my
head ;

Wer't not for thee, my son, I now should die ;
Full sixty years I fought the Christian's cause,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their pow'r destroy'd :
Twenty, a captive, in a dungeon's depth, 321

Yet never for myself my tears sought Heaven ;
All for my children rose my fruitless prayers :
Yet, what avails a father's wretched joy ?

I have a daughter gain'd, and Heav'n an enemy.
Oh, my misguided daughter—lose not thy faith,
Reclaim thy birthright—think upon the blood
Of twenty Christian kings, that fills thy veins ;
'Tis heroes' blood—the blood of saints and martyrs !
What would thy mother feel, to see thee thus !
She, and thy murder'd brothers !—think, they call
thee ?

Think that thou seest 'em stretch their bloody arms,
And weep to win thee from their murd'rer's bosom.
Ev'n in the place where thou betray'st thy God,
He dy'd, my child, to save thee.—“ Turn thy eyes,
“ And see ; for thou art near his sacred sepulchre ;
“ Thou canst not move a step, but where he trod !”
Thou tremblest—Oh ! admit me to thy soul ;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father ; 339
“ Take not thus soon, again, the life thou gav'st
him :”

Shame not thy mother—not renounce thy God.—

'Tis past—Repentance dawns in thy sweet eyes ;
I see bright truth descending to thy heart,
And now, my long-lost child is found for ever.

“ *Ner.* Oh, doubly blest ! a sister, and a soul,
“ To be redeem’d together !”

Zar. Oh, my father !
Dear author of my life ! inform me, teach me,
What should my duty do ?

Lus. By one short word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say thou art a Christian——

Zar. Sir—I am a Christian.

Lus. Receive her, gracious Heaven ! and bless her
for it.

Enter ORASMIN.

Oras. Madam, the Sultan order’d me to tell you,
That he expects you instant quit this place,
And bid your last farewell to these vile Christians.
You, captive Frenchmen, follow me ; for you,
It is my task to answer.——

Chat. Still new miseries ! 360
How cautious man should be, to say, I’m happy !

Lus. These are the times, my friends, to try our
firmness,
Our Christian firmness.——

Zar. Alas, sir ! Oh !

Lus. Oh, you !—I dare not name you !
Farewell—but, come what may, be sure remember
You keep the fatal secret ! for the rest,
Leave all to Heaven——be faithful, and be blest.

(Exeunt)

ACT III. SCENE I.OSMAN *and* ORASMIN.*Osman.*

ORASMIN, this alarm was false and groundless ;
Lewis no long turns his arms on me ;
The French, grown weary by a length of woes,
Wish not at once to quit their fruitful plains,
And famish on Arabia's desert sands.
Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the Syrian seas :
And Lewis, hovering o'er the coast of Cyprus,
Alarms the fears of Asia—But I've learnt,
That steering wide from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder at th' Egyptian shore.
There let him war, and waste my enemies ;
Their mutual conflict will but fix my throne.—
Release those Christians—I restore their freedom ;
'Twill please their master, nor can weaken me :
Transport 'em at my cost, to find their king ;
I wish to have him know me : carry thither
This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
Because I cannot fear his fame in arms ;
But love him for his virtue and his blood.
Tell him, my father, having conquer'd twice, 20
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains ; but I
Have set him free, that I might triumph more.
Oraf. The Christians gain an army in his name.

Ofm. I cannot fear a sound.—

Oraf. But, sir——should Lewis——

Ofm. Tell Lewis and the world——it shall be so :

Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves :

Thy statesman's reason is too dull for love !

“ Why wilt thou force me to confess it all ?

“ Tho' I to Lewis send back Lusignan,

“ I give him but to Zara—I have griev'd her ;

“ And ow'd her the atonement of this joy.

“ Thy false advices, which but now misled

“ My anger, to confine those helpless Christians,

“ Gave her a pain ; I feel for her and me :”

But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.

For one long hour I yet defer my nuptials ;

“ But, 'tis not lost, that hour ! 'twill be all hers !”

She would employ it in a conference

With that Nerestan, whom thou know'st——that
Christian !

Oraf. And have you, sir, indulged that strange desire ?

Ofm. What mean'st thou ? They were infant slaves together ;

Friends should part kind, who are to meet no more.

When Zara asks, I will refuse her nothing :

Restraint was never made for those we love.

Down with those rigours of the proud seraglio ;

I hate its laws—where blind austerity

Sinks virtue to necessity.—My blood

Disclaims your Asian jealousy ;—I hold

The fierce, free plainness of my Scythian ancestors,

Their open confidence, their honest hate,

Their love unfearing, and their anger told.

Go—the good Christian waits—conduct him to her ;

Zara expects thee—What she wills, obey.

[*Exit* Osman.

Oraf. Ho ! Christian ! enter——wait a moment here.

Enter NERESTAN.

Zara will soon approach—I go to find her.

Exit Oraf.

Ner. In what a state, in what a place, I leave her ?

Oh, faith ! Oh, father ! Oh, my poor lost sister !
She's here——

Enter ZARA.

Thank Heaven, it is not, then, unlawful 60
To see you, yet once more, my lovely sister !
Not all so happy !——We, who met but now,
Shall never meet again——for Lusignan——
We shall be orphans still, and want a father.

Zar. Forbid it Heaven !

Ner. His last sad hour's at hand——
That flow of joy, which follow'd our discovery,
Too strong and sudden for his age's weakness,
Wasting his spirits, dry'd the source of life,
And nature yields him up to time's demand.
Shall he not die in peace ?—Oh ! let no doubt
Disturb his parting moments with distrust ;
Let me, when I return to close his eyes,

Compose his mind's impatience too, and tell him,
You are confirm'd a Christian!——

Zar. Oh! may his soul enjoy, in earth and heaven,

Eternal rest! nor let one thought, one sigh,
One bold complaint of mine recall his cares!
But you have injur'd me, who still can doubt.——
What! am I not your sister? and shall you 80
Refuse me credit? You suppose me light;
You, who should judge my honour by your own,
Shall you distrust a truth I dar'd avow,
And stamp apostate on a sister's heart!

Ner. Ah! do not misconceive me!—if I err'd,
Affection, not distrust, misled my fear;
Your will may be a Christian, yet, not you;
There is a sacred mark—a sign of faith,
A pledge of promise, that must firm your claim;
Wash you from guilt, and open Heaven before you.
Swear, swear by all the woes we all have borne,
By all the martyr'd faints, who call you daughter,
That you consent, this day, to seal our faith,
By that mysterious rite which waits your call.

Zar. I swear by Heaven, and all its holy host,
Its faints, its martyrs, its attesting angels,
And the dread presence of its living author,
To have no faith but yours;—to die a Christian!
Now, tell me what this mystic faith requires.

Ner. To hate the happiness of Osman's throne,
And love that God, who, thro' his maze of woes,
Has brought us all, unhoping, thus together.
For me—I am a foldier, uninstructed,
Nor daring to instruct, tho' strong in faith:

But I will bring th' ambassador of Heaven,
To clear your views, and lift you to your God !
Be it your task to gain admiffion for him.—
But where ? from whom ?—Oh ! thou immortal
Power !

Whence can we hope it, in this curs'd seraglio ?
Who is this slave of Osman ? Yes, this slave !
Does she not boast the blood of twenty kings ?
Is not her race the same with that of Lewis ?
Is she not Lufignan's unhappy daughter ?
A Christian, and my fister ?—yet a slave !
A willing slave !—I dare not fpeak more plainly.

Zar. Cruel ! go on—Alas ! you do not know
me !

At once, a ftranger to my fecret fate,
My pains, my fears, my wifhes, and my power :
I am—I will be Christian—will receive
This holy prieft, with his myfterious bleffing ;
I will not do nor fuffer aught unworthy
Myfelf, my father, or my father's race.—
But, tell me——nor be tender on this point,—
What punifhment your Christian laws decree,
For an unhappy wretch, who, to herfelf
Unknown, and all abandon'd by the world,
Loft and enflav'd, has, in her fov'reign mafter,
Found a protector, generous as great,
Has touch'd his heart, and giv'n him all her own ?

Ner. The punifhment of fuch a fave fhould be
Death in this world—and pain in that to come.

Zar. I am that fave—ftrike here—and fave my
fhame.

Ner. Deffruccion to my hopes !—Can it be you ?

Zar. It is—Ador'd by Osman, I adore him :
This hour the nuptial rites will make us one.

Ner. What ! marry Osman !—Let the world grow
dark,

That the extinguish'd sun may hide thy shame !
Could it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zar. Strike, strike—I love him—yes, by Heav'n, I
love him,

Ner. Death is thy due—but not thy due from me :
Yet, were the honour of our house no bar—
My father's fame, and the too gentle laws
Of that religion which thou hast disgrac'd—
Did not the God thou quit't hold back my arm—
Not there—I could not there—but, by my soul,
I would rush, desp'rate, to the Sultan's breast,
And plunge my sword in his proud heart who damns
thee.

Oh ! shame ! shame ! shame ! at such a time as this !
When Lewis ! that awak'ner of the world,
Beneath the lifted cross makes Egypt pale,
And draws the sword of Heaven to spread our
faith !

Now to submit to see my sister doom'd
A bosom slave to him whose tyrant heart
But measures glory by the Christian's woe.
Yes—I will dare acquaint our father with it ;
Departing Lufignan may live so long,
As just to bear thy shame, and die to 'scape it.

Zar. Stay—my too angry brother—stay—perhaps,
Zara has resolution great as thine :
'Tis cruel—and unkind !—Thy words are crimes ;
My weakness, but misfortune ! Dost thou suffer a

I suffer more;—Oh! would to Heaven this blood
 Of twenty boasted kings would stop at once,
 And stagnate in my heart!—It then no more
 Would rush in boiling fevers thro' my veins,
 And ev'ry trembling drop be fill'd with Osman.
 How has he lov'd me! how has he oblig'd me!
 I owe thee to him! What has he not done,
 To justify his boundless pow'r of charming?
 For me, he softens the severe decrees
 Of his own faith;—and is it just that mine
 Should bid me hate him, but because he loves me?
 No—I will be a Christian—but preserve
 My gratitude as sacred as my faith;
 If I have death to fear for Osman's sake,
 It must be from his coldness, not his love.

Ner. I must at once condemn and pity thee;
 “I cannot point thee out which way to go,
 “But Providence will lend its light to guide thee.
 “That sacred rite, which thou shalt now receive,
 “Will strengthen and support thy feeble heart,
 “To live an innocent, or die a martyr:”
 Here, then, begin performance of thy vow;
 Here, in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
 Promise thy king, thy father, and thy God,
 Not to accomplish these detested nuptials,
 Till first the rev'rend priest has clear'd your eyes,
 Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to Heav'n.
 Promise me this —

Zar. So, bless me, Heav'n! I do. —
 Go—hasten the good priest, I will expect him.
But first return—cheer my expiring father.

Tell him I am, and will be all he wishes me :

Tell him, to give him life 'twere joy to die.

Ner. I go—Farewel—farewel, unhappy sister !

[*Exit Nereftan.*]

Zar. I am alone—and now be just, my heart !

And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God ?

What am I ? What am I about to be ?

Daughter of Lufignan—or wife to Osman ?

Am I a lover most, or most a Christian ?

“ Wou'd Selima were come ! and yet 'tis just,

“ All friends should fly her who forsakes herself.”

What shall I do ?—What heart has strength to bear

These double weights of duty ?—Help me, Heav'n !

To thy hard laws I render up my soul :

But, Oh ! demand it back—for now 'tis Osman's.

Enter OSMAN.

Ofm. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely
Zara !

Impatient eyes attend—the rites expect thee ;

And my devoted heart no longer brooks

This distance from its soft'ner !—“ all the lamps

“ Of nuptial love are lighted, and burn pure,

“ As if they drew their brightness from thy blushes :

“ The holy mosque is fill'd with fragrant fumes,

“ Which emulate the sweetness of thy breathing :

“ My prostrate people all confirm my choice,

“ And send their souls to heaven in prayers for blessings.

“ Thy envious rivals, conscious of thy right,

“ Approve superior charms, and join to praise thee ;

"The throne that waits thee, seems to shine more richly,

"As all its gems, with animated lustre,

"Fear'd to look dim beneath the eyes of Zara!"

Come, my slow love! the ceremonies wait thee;

Come, and begin from this dear hour my triumph.

Zar. Oh, what a wretch am I! Oh, grief! Oh, love!

Ofm. Come——come——

Zar. Where shall I hide my blushes?

Ofm. Blushes——here, in my bosom, hide 'em.

Zar. My lord!"

Ofm. Nay, Zara—give me thy hand, and come—

Zar. Instruct me, Heaven!

What I should say—Alas! I cannot speak.

Ofm. Away—this modest, sweet reluctant trifling

But doubles my desires, and thy own beauties.

Zar. Ah, me!

Ofm. Nay—but thou should'st not be too cruel.

Zar. I can no longer bear it—Oh, my lord—

Ofm. Ha!—"What?—whence?—how?"——

Zar. My lord! my sov'reign!

Heav'n knows this marriage would have been a bliss

Above my humble hopes!—yet, witness love!

Not from the grandeur of your throne, that bliss,

But from the pride of calling *Osman* mine.

"Would you had been no emperor! and I

"Possess'd of power and charms deserving you!

"That, slighting *Asia's* thrones, I might alone

"Have left a proffer'd world, to follow you

"Through deserts, uninhabited by men,

"And blest'd with ample room for peace and love:"

But, as it is—these Christians——

Ofm. Christians ! What !

How start two images into thy thoughts,

So distant—as the Christians and my love !

Zar. That good old Christian, rev'rend Lufignan,
Now dying, ends his life and woes together.

Ofm. Well ! let him die—What has thy heart to
feel,

Thus pressing, and thus tender, from the death
Of an old wretched Christian ?—Thank our prophet,

Thou art no Christian !—Educated here,

Thy happy youth was taught our better faith :

Sweet as thy pity shines, 'tis now mis-tim'd.

What ! tho' an aged sufferer dies unhappy,

Why should his foreign fate disturb our joys ?

Zar. Sir, if you love me, and would have me think
That I am truly dear—

Ofm. Heaven ! if I love !

Zar. Permit me—

Ofm. What ?

Zar. To desire——

Ofm. Speak out.

Zar. The nuptial rites
May be deferr'd till—

Ofm. What !—Is that the voice
Of Zara ?

Zar. Oh, I cannot bear his frown !

Ofm. Of Zara !

Zar. It is dreadful to my heart,
To give you but a seeming cause for anger ;

Pardon my grief—Alas ! I cannot bear it ;
 There is a painful terror in your eye
 That pierces to my soul—hid from your sight
 I go to make a moment's truce with tears,
 And gather force to speak of my despair.

[*Exit disordered.*]

Ofm. I stand immoveable, like senseless marble ;
 Horror had frozen my suspended tongue ;
 And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will
 Of power to tell her that she shock'd my soul !
 Spoke she to me ?—Sure I misunderstood her !
 Cou'd it be me she left ?—What have I seen !

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, what a change is here !—She's gone,
 And I permitted it, I know not how.

Oras. Perhaps you but accuse the charming fault
 Of innocence, too modest oft in love.

Ofm. But why, and whence those tears ?—those
 looks ! that flight !

That grief, so strongly stamp'd on every feature ?
 If it has been that Frenchman !—What a thought !
 How low, how horrid a suspicion that !

“ The dreadful flash at once gives light and kills me !

“ My too bold confidence repell'd my caution—

“ An infidel ! a slave !—a heart like mine

“ Reduc'd to suffer from so vile a rival !”

But tell me, did'st thou mark 'em at their parting ?
 Did'st thou observe the language of their eyes ?

Hide nothing from me—Is my love betray'd ?

Tell me my whole disgrace : nay, if thou tremblest,
I hear thy pity speak, though thou art silent.

Oraf. I tremble at the pangs I see you suffer.
Let not your angry apprehension urge
Your faithful slave to irritate your anguish ;
I did, 'tis true, observe some parting tears ;
But they were tears of charity and grief :
I cannot think there was a cause deserving
This agony of passion——

Osm. Why no——I thank thee——
Orafmin, thou art wise ! It cou'd not be
That I should stand expos'd to such an insult.
Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,
She wants not wisdom to have hid it better :
How rightly didst thou judge !—Zara shall know it,
And thank thy honest service——After all,
Might she not have some cause for tears, which I
Claim no concern in—but the grief it gives her ?
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave,
Who goes to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wishes,
Nay, who resolves to see those climes no more.

Oraf. Why did you, Sir, against our country's
custom,
Indulge him with a second leave to come ?
He said, he should return once more to see her.

Osm. Return ! the traitor ! he return !—Dares he
Presume to press a second interview ?
Would he be seen again ?—He shall be seen ;
But dead.—I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithless fair to feel my anger.
Be still, my transports ; violence is blind :
I know my heart at once is fierce and weak ;

" I feel that I descend below myself ;
" Zara can never justly be suspected ;
" Her sweetness was not formed to cover treason :
" Yet, Osman must not stoop to woman's follies ;
" Their tears, complaints, regrets, and reconcile-
ments,
" With all their light, capricious roll of changes,
" Are arts too vulgar to be tried on me.
" It would become me better to resume
" The empire of my will." Rather than fall
Beneath myself, I must, how dear soe'er
It costs me, rise—till I look down on Zara !——
Away——but mark me——these seraglio doors,
Against all Christians be they henceforth shut,
Close as the dark retreats of silent death.

[*Exit* Orasmin.

What have I done, just Heav'n ! thy rage to move,
That thou shouldst sink me down, so low to love ?

[*Exit*.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ZARA, SELIMA.

Selima.

AH, Madam ! how at once I grieve your fate,
And how admire your virtue !—Heaven permits,

D

And Heaven will give you strength, to bear misfortune ;

To break these chains, so strong and yet so dear.

Zar. Oh, that I could support the fatal struggle !

Sel. Th' Eternal aids your weakness, sees your will,

Directs your purpose, and rewards your sorrows.

Zar. Never had wretch more cause to hope he does.

Sel. What ! tho' you here no more behold your father ?

There is a Father to be found above,
Who can restore that father to his daughter.

Zar. But I have planted pain in Osman's bosom ;
He loves me, even to death ! and I reward him
With anguish and despair.—How base ! how cruel !
But I deserv'd him not ; I should have been
Too happy, and the hand of Heav'n repell'd me.

Sel. What ! will you then regret the glorious loss,
And hazard thus a vict'ry bravely won ?

Zar. Inhuman vict'ry !——thou dost not know
This love so pow'rful, this sole joy of life, 20
This first, best hope of earthly happiness,
Is yet less pow'rful in my heart than Heaven !
To him who made that heart I offer it ;
There, there, I sacrifice my bleeding passion ;
I pour before him ev'ry guilty tear ;
I beg him to efface the fond impression,
And fill with his own image all my soul :
But, while I weep and sigh, repent and pray,
Remembrance brings the object of my love,
And ev'ry light illusion floats before him.

I see, I hear him, and again he charms !
Fills my glad soul, and shines 'twixt me and Heav'n !
Oh, all ye royal ancestors ! Oh, father !
Mother ! You Christians, and the Christians' God !
You who deprive me of this gen'rous lover !
If you permit me not to live for him,
Let me not live at all, and I am blest'd :
" Let me die innocent ; let his dear hand
" Close the sad eyes of her he stoop'd to love,
" And I acquit my fate, and ask no more. 40
" But he forgives me not——regardless now,
" Whether, or how I live, or when I die.
" He quits me, scorns me——and I yet live on,
" And talk of death as distant."——

Sel. Ah ! despair not ;

Trust your eternal helper, and be happy.

Zar. Why——what has Osman done, that he too
should not ?

Has Heaven so nobly form'd his heart to hate it ?
Gen'rous and just, beneficent and brave,
Were he but Christian——What can man be more ?
I wish, methinks, this rev'rend priest was come
To free me from these doubts, which shake my soul :
Yet know not why I should not dare to hope,
That Heav'n, whose mercy all confess and feel,
Will pardon and approve th' alliance with'd :
Perhaps it seats me on the throne of Syria,
To tax my pow'r for these good Christians' comfort.
Thou know'st the mighty Saladine, who first
Conquer'd this empire from my father's race,

Who, like my Osman charm'd th' admiring world,
Drew breath, tho' Syrian, from a Christian mother.

Sel. What mean you, madam! Ah! you do not
see—

Zar. Yes, yes—I see it all; I am not blind :
I see my country and my race condemn me ;
I see, that spite of all, I still love Osman.

What if I now go throw me at his feet,
And tell him there sincerely what I am?

Sel. Consider—that might cost your brother's life,
Expose the Christians, and betray you all.

Zar. You do not know the noble heart of Osman.

Sel. I know him the protector of a faith,
Sworn enemy to ours ;——The more he loves,
The less will he permit you to profess
Opinions which he hates : to-night the priest,
In private introduc'd, attends you here ;
You promis'd him admission——

Zar. Would I had not !
I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal secret ;
My father's urg'd command requir'd it of me ;
I must obey, all dangerous as it is ; 80
Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd,
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter OSMAN.

Ofm. Madam ! there was a time when my charm'd
heart
Made it a virtue to be lost in love ;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame,
And every day still made you dearer to me.

You taught me, 'madam, to believe my love
Rewarded and return'd—nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason: Emperors
Who choose to sigh devoted at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their slaves,
Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But 'twere prophane to think of power in love.
Dear as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's another's.
You will not find me a weak, jealous lover,
By coarse reproaches, giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness—wounded deeply,
Yet shunning and disdaining low complaint,
I come—to tell you——

100

Zar. Give my trembling heart

A moment's respite——

Os. "That unwilling coldness

"Is the just prize of your capricious lightness;

"Your ready arts may spare the fruitless pains

"Of colouring deceit with fair pretences;

"I would not wish to hear your slight excuses:

"I cherish ignorance, to save my blushes."

Osman in every trial shall remember

That he is emperor.—Whate'er I suffer,

'Tis due to honour that I give up you,

And to my injur'd bosom take despair,

Rather than shamefully possess you sighing,

Convinc'd those sighs were never meant for me—

Go, madam—you are free—from Osman's pow'r—

Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Zar. At last, 'tis come—the fear'd, the murder'ing
moment

Is come——and I am curs'd by earth and heaven !

[Throws herself on the ground.]

If it is true that I am lov'd no more—— 120

If you——

Ofm. It is too true, my fame requires it ;
It is too true, that I unwilling leave you :
That I at once renounce you and adore——
Zara !——you weep !

Zar. If I am doom'd to lose you,
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving and unlov'd——Oh ! yet, do justice
To the afflicted——do not wrong me doubly :
Punish me, if 'tis needful to your peace,
But say not, I deserv'd it——“ This, at least,
“ Believe——for not the greatness of your soul
“ Is truth more pure and sacred——no regret
“ Can touch my bleeding heart, for I have lost
“ The rank of her you raise to share your throne.
“ I know I never ought to have been there ;
“ My fate and my defects require I lose you.”
But ah ! my heart was never known to *Osman*.
May Heav'n that punishes for ever hate me,
If I regret the loss of aught but you.

Ofm. Rise——“ rise, this means not love ?” 140

“ *Zar.* Strike——Strike me, Heaven !”

Ofm. What ! is it love to force yourself to wound
The heart you wish to gladden ? But I find
Lovers least know themselves ; for I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you ;
Yet see !——you did but weep, and have resum'd me !
Proud as I am——I must confess, one with
Evades my power——the blessing to forget you.

Zara—thy tears were form'd to teach disdain,
That softness can disarm it.—'Tis decreed.
I must for ever love—but from what cause,
If thy consenting heart partakes my fires,
Art thou reluctant to a blessing meant me?
Speak! “Is it levity—or, is it fear?
“Fear of a power that, but for blessing thee,
“Had, without joy, been painful.”—Is it artifice?
Oh! spare the needless pains—Art was not made
For Zara.—Art, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving—I abhor'd it ever.

Zar. Alas! I have no art; not even enough 160
To hide this love, and this distress you give me.

Ofm. New riddles! Speak with plainness to my
soul;

What canst thou mean?

Zar. I have no power to speak it.

Ofm. Is it some secret dangerous to my state?
Is it some Christian plot grown ripe against me?

Zar. Lives there a wretch so vile as to betray
you!

Osman is bless'd beyond the reach of fear:
Fears and misfortunes threaten only Zara.

Ofm. Why threaten Zara?

Zar. Permit me, at your feet,
Thus trembling, to beseech a favour from you.

Ofm. A favour! Oh, you guide the will of Osman.

Zar. Ah! would to Heav'n our duties were
united,

“Firm as our thoughts and wishes!” But this day;
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far divided from your eye,

To cover my distress, lest you, too tender,
Should see and share it with me—from to-morrow,
I will not have a thought conceal'd from you. 180

“ *Osman*. What strange disquiet, from what stranger
cause !

“ *Zar*. If I am really blest'd with *Osman*'s love,
“ He will not then refuse this humble prayer.”

“ *Osman*. If it must be, it must.—Be pleas'd, my will
Takes purpose from your wishes ; and consent
Depends not on my choice, but your decree :
Go—but remember how he loves, who thus
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.

Zar. It gives me more than pain to make you
feel it.

Osman. And——can you, *Zara*, leave me ?

Zar. Alas ! my lord ! [Exit *Zara*.

Osman. [*Alone*.] It should be yet, methinks, too soon
to fly me !

Too soon, as yet, to wrong my easy faith.
The more I think, the less I can conceive,
What hidden cause should raise such strange despair !
Now, when her hopes have wings, and every wish
Is courted to be lively !—When I love,
And joy and empire press her to their bosom ;
“ When not alone lov'd, but ev'n a lover : 199
“ Professing and accepting ; blest'd and blessing ;
“ To see her eyes, through tears, shine mystic love !
“ 'Tis madness ! and I were unworthy power,
“ To suffer longer the capricious insult !”
Yet, was I blameless ?—No—I was too rash ;
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it to her ;
I have distrust'd her—and still she loves :

Gen'rous atonement that ! " and 'tis my duty
 " To expiate, by a length of soft indulgence,
 " The transports of a rage, which still was love.
 " Henceforth, I never will suspect her false ;
 " Nature's plain power of charming dwells about her,
 " And innocence gives force to ev'ry word.
 " I owe full confidence to all she looks,
 " For in her eye shines truth, and ev'ry beam
 " Shoots confirmation round her."—I remark'd,
 Ev'n while she wept, her soul a thousand times
 Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
 With honest, ardent utt'rance of her love.——
 Who can possess a heart so low, so base,
 To look such tendernefs, and yet have none ? 220

Enter MELIDOR with ORASMIN.

Mel. This letter, great disposer of the world !
 Address'd to Zara, and in private brought,
 Your faithful guards this moment intercepted,
 And humbly offer to your sovereign eye.

Ofm. Come nearer, give it me.—To Zara !—Rise.
 Bring it with speed——Shame on your flattering
 distance——

[*Advancing, and snatching the letter.*
 Be honest—and approach me like a subject
 Who serves the prince, yet not forgets the man.

Mel. One of the Christian slaves, whom late your
 bounty
 Releas'd from bondage, fought with heedful guile,
 Unnotic'd to deliver it.——Discover'd
 He waits, in chains, his doom from your decree.

Osm. Leave me ! I tremble, as if something fatal
Were meant me from this letter—should I read it ?

Oraf. Who knows but it contains some happy truth
That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart ?

Osm. Be it as 'twill—it shall be read—“ my hands
“ Have apprehension that out-reaches mine !

“ Why should they tremble thus ? ”—’tis done—

and now,

[*Opens the letter.*

Fate, be thy call obey’d—Orafmin, mark— 240

‘ There is a secret passage tow’rd the mosque ;
‘ That way you might escape ; and unperceiv’d,
‘ Fly your observers, and fulfil our hope ;
‘ Despise the danger, and depend on me,
‘ Who wait you, but to die if you deceive.’”

Hell ! tortures ! death ! and woman !—What,
Orafmin !

Are we awake ? Heardst thou ? Can this be Zara ?

Oraf. Would I had lost all sense—for what I
heard

Has cover’d my afflicted heart with horror.

Osm. Thou seest how I am treated !

Oraf. Monstrous treason !

To an affront like this you cannot—must not
Remain insensible—You, who but now,
From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must, in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and banish love.

Osm. Seek her this instant—go, Orafmin, fly—
Shew her this letter—bid her read and tremble :

Then, in the rising horrors of her guilt,
 Stab her unfaithful breast, and let her die. 260
 Say, while thou strik'st——Stay, stay, return and
 pity me ;

“ I will think first a moment—Let that Christian
 “ Be strait confronted with her—Stay—I will,
 “ I will—I know not what !”——Would I were
 dead !

Would I had dy'd, unconscious of this shame !

Oraf. Never did prince receive so bold a wrong,

Ofm. See here detected this infernal secret !

‘ This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart

Mistook for marks of tenderness and pain !

Why ! what a reach has woman to deceive !

Under how fine a veil of grief and fear

Did she propose retirement 'till to-morrow !

And I, blind dotard ! gave the fool's consent,

Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go ! —— She parted,

Diffolv'd in tears ; and parted to betray me !

“ *Oraf.* Reflection serves but to confirm her guilt.

“ At length resume yourself ; awaken thought ;

“ Assert your greatness ; and resolve like *Osman*.

“ *Ofm.* Nereestan, too—Was this the boasted ho-
 nour

“ Of that proud Christian, whom Jerusalem 280

“ Grew loud in praising ! whose half envy'd virtue

“ I wonder'd at myself ; and felt disdain

“ To be but equal to a Christian's greatness !

“ And does he thank me thus ; base infidel !

“ Honest, pretending, pious, praying villain ?

“ Yet Zara is a thousand times more base,

“ *More hypocrite, than he ? A slave ! a wretch !*

" So low, so lost, that even the vilest labours,
" In which he lay condemn'd, could never sink him
" Beneath his native infamy — Did she not know
" What I have done, what suffer'd—for her sake?"

Oraf. Could you, my gracious lord! forgive my
zeal,

You would——

Osm. I know it—thou art right—I'll see her—
I'll tax her in thy presence;—I'll upbraid her——
I'll let her learn—Go—find, and bring her to me.

" *Oraf.* Alas, my lord! disorder'd as you are,
" What can you wish to say?

" *Osm.* I know not, now——

" But I resolve to see her—lest she think 300
" Her falsehood has, perhaps, the power to grieve
me.

Oraf. Believe me, sir, your threat'nings, your
complaints,

What will they all produce, but Zara's tears
To quench this fancy'd anger! Your lost heart,
Seduc'd against itself, will search but reasons
To justify the guilt, which gives it pain :
Rather conceal from Zara this discovery ;
And let some trusty slave convey the letter,
Reclos'd to her own hand—then shall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,
The firmness, or abasement of her soul.

Osm. Thy counsel charms me! We'll about it
now.

" 'Twill be some recompence, at least, to see
" Her blushes when detected. ——

“ *Oraf.* Oh, my lord !

“ I doubt you in the trial——for your heart.——

“ *Ofm.* Distrust me not—my love, indeed, is weak,

“ But honour and disdain more strong than Zara.”

Here, take this fatal letter—chuse a slave

Whom yet she never saw, and who retains 320

His tried fidelity—Dispatch—begone——

[*Exit Orafmin.*

Now, whither shall I turn my eyes and steps,

The surest way to shun her : and give time

For this discovering trial ?——Heav’n ! she’s here !

Enter ZARA.

So, Madam ! fortune will befriend my cause,
And free me from your fetters.—You are met

Most aptly, to dispel a new-ris’n doubt,

That claims the finest of your arts to gloss it.

Unhappy each by other, it is time

To end our mutual pain, that both may rest :

You want not generosity, but love ;

My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,

My favours, cares, respect, and tendernefs,

Touching your gratitude, provok’d regard ;

’Till, by a length of benefits besieg’d,

Your heart submitted, and you thought ’twas love :

But you deceiv’d yourself and injur’d me.

There is, I’m told, an object more deserving

Your love than *Osman*——I would know his name :

Be just, nor trifle with my anger : tell me 340

Now, while expiring pity struggles faint ;

While I have yet, perhaps, the pow'r to pardon :
Give up the bold invader of my claim,
And let him die to save thee. Thou art known ;
Think and resolve—While I yet speak, renounce
him ;

While yet the thunder rolls suspended, stay it ;
Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,
That turns averse, and dwells no more on Zara.

Zar. Can it be Osman speaks, and speaks to Zara ?
Learn, cruel ? learn, that this afflicted heart,
This heart which Heav'n delights to prove by tor-
tures,

Did it not love, has pride and power to shun you.

“ Alas ! you will not know me ! What have I

“ To fear, but that unhappy love you question ?

“ That love which only could outweigh the shame

“ I feel, while I descend to weep my wrongs.”

I know not whether Heav'n, that frowns upon me,

Has destin'd my unhappy days for yours ;

But, be my fate or blest'd or curs'd, I swear

By honour, dearer ev'n than life or love, 360

Could Zara be but mistress of herself,

She would, with cold regard, look down on kings,

And, you alone excepted, fly 'em all.

“ Would you learn more, and open all my heart ?

“ Know then, that, spite of this renew'd injustice,

“ I do not—cannot wish to love you less :

“ That, long before you look'd so low as Zara

“ She gave her heart to Osman ; yours, before

“ Your benefits had bought her, or your eye

“ Had thrown distinction round her ; never had,

“ Nor ever will acknowledge other lover :”—

And to this sacred truth, attesting Heaven,
I call thy dreadful notice! If my heart
Deserves reproach, 'tis for, but not from Osman.

Ofm. "What! does she yet presume to swear sincerity!"

Oh, boldness of unblushing perjury!
Had I not seen; had I not read such proof
Of her light falshood as extinguish'd doubt,
I could not be a man, and not believe her.

Zar. Alas, my lord! what cruel fears have seiz'd
you? 380

What harsh, mysterious words were those I heard?

Ofm. What fears should Osman feel, since Zara
loves him?

Zar. I cannot live and answer to your voice
In that reproachful tone; your angry eye
Trembles with fury while you talk of love.

Ofm. Since Zara loves him!

Zar. Is it possible
Osman should disbelieve it?—Again, again
Your late-repentent violence returns—

Alas! what killing frowns you dart against me!
Can it be kind? Can it be just to doubt me?

Ofm. No! I can doubt no longer—You may retire.

[*Exit Zara.*]

Re-enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, she's perfidious, even beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming;
"She's at the topmost point of shameless artifice;
"An empress at deceiving! Soft and easy,

" Destroying like a plague, in calm tranquility :
 " She's innocent she swears—so is the fire ;
 " It shines in harmless distance, bright and pleasing,
 " Consuming nothing till it first embraces." 400
 Say ; hast thou chosen a slave ?—Is he instructed ?
 Hasten to detect her villainies and my wrongs.

Oras. Punctual I have obey'd your whole command :

But have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd heart,
 With coldness and indifference ! Can you hear,
 All painless and unmov'd the false one's shame ?

Ofm. Orasmin, I adore her more than ever.

Oras. My lord ! my emperor ! forbid it, Heaven !

Ofm. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope ;

" This hateful Christian, the light growth of France,

" Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,

" Has misconceiv'd some charitable glance,

" And judg'd it love in Zara : he alone,

" Then, has offended me. Is it her fault,

" If those she charms are indiscreet and daring ?

" Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter ;

" And I, with rashness groundless as its writer's,

" Took fire at my own fancy, and have wrong'd
her."

Now hear me with attention—Soon as night
 Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace ;
 When this Nereestan, this ungrateful Christian, 421
 Shall lurk in expectation near our walls,
 Be watchful that our guards surprize and seize him ;
 Then, bound in fetters and o'erwhelm'd with
shame,

Conduct the daring traitor to my presence :—

But, above all, be sure you hurt not Zara ;
Mindful to what supreme excess I love. [*Exit Oras.*
On this last trial all my hopes depend ;
Prophet, for once thy kind assistance lend,
Dispel the doubts that rack my anxious breast,
If Zara's innocent, thy Osman's blest. [*Exit.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

ZARA and SELIMA.

Zara.

SOOTH me no longer, with this vain desire ;
To a recluse like me, who dares henceforth
Presume admission !——the seraglio's shut——
Barr'd and impassable——as death to time !
My brother ne'er must hope to see me more :——
How now ! what unknown slave accosts us here ?

Enter MELIDOR.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
In secret witness I am wholly yours.

[*Zara reads the letter.*

Sel. [*Aside.*] Thou everlasting ruler of the world !
Shed thy wish'd mercy on our hopeless tears ;
Redeem us from the hands of hated infidels,
And save my princess from the breast of Osman.

Zar. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your counsel.

Sel. Retire—you shall be call'd—wait near—Go,
leave us. [Exit Mel.

Zar. Read this, and tell me what I ought to answer :

For I would gladly hear my brother's voice.

Sel. Say rather you would hear the voice of Heav'n.
'Tis not your brother calls you, but your God.

Zar. I know it, nor resist his awful will;
Thou know'st that I have bound my soul by oath; 20
But can I—ought I—to engage myself,
My brother, and the Christians, in this danger?

Sel. 'Tis not their danger that alarms your fears;
Your love speaks loudest to your shrinking soul;
“ I know your heart of strength to hazard all,
“ But it has let in traitors, who surrender
“ On poor pretence of safety :—Learn at least,
“ To understand the weakness that deceives you :
“ You tremble to offend your haughty lover,
“ Whom wrongs and outrage but endear the more ;
“ Yes—you are blind to Osman's cruel nature,
“ That Tartar's fierceness, that obscures his boun-
ties ;”

This tyger, savage in his tenderness,
Courts with contempt, and threatens amidst softness ;
Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
His fated, fix'd impression !

Zar. What reproach

Can I with justice make him ?——I, indeed,
Have given him cause to hate me !——

Was not his throne, was not his temple ready ? 40
Did he not court his slave to be a queen,

And have not I declin'd it?—I who ought
To tremble, conscious of affronted power !
Have not I triumph'd o'er his pride and love ?
Seen him submit his own high will to mine,
And sacrifice his wishes to my weakness ?

Sel. Talk we no more of this unhappy passion :
What resolution will your virtue take ?

Zar. All things combine to sink me to despair :
From the seraglio death alone will free me.
I long to see the Christians' happy climes ;
Yet in the moment, while I form that prayer,
I sigh a secret wish to languish here.
How sad a state is mine ! my restless soul
All ign'rant what to do, or what to wish ?
My only perfect sense is that of pain.
Oh, guardian Heav'n ! protect my brother's life,
For I will meet him, and fulfil his prayer :
Then, when from Solyma's unfriendly walls,
His absence shall unbind his sister's tongue, 60
Osman shall learn the secret of my birth,
My faith unshaken, and my deathless love ;
He will approve my choice, and pity me.
I'll send my brother word he may expect me.
Call in the faithful slave—God of my fathers !

[*Exit Selima.*

Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct.

Enter SELIMA and MELIDOR.

Go——tell the Christian who intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger ;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,

Expect, and introduce him to his wish.

Away—the Sultan comes ; he must not find us.

[*Exeunt Zara and Selima.*]

Enter OSMAN and ORASMIN.

Ofm. Swifter, ye hours, move on ; my fury glows
Impatient, and would push the wheels of time.
How now ! What message dost thou bring ? Speak
boldly—

What answer gave she to the letter sent her ?

Mel. She blush'd and trembl'd, and grew pale, and
paus'd.

Then blush'd, and read it ; and again grew pale ;
And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd :
For after all this race of varied passions,
When she had sent me out, and call'd me back, 80
Tell him (she cry'd) who has intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger ;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.

Ofm. Enough—begone—I have no ear for more.—

[*To the slave.*]

Leave me, thou too, Orasmin.—Leave me, life,

[*To Orasmin.*]

For ev'ry mortal aspect moves my hate :

Leave me to my distraction——“ I grow mad,

“ And cannot bear the visage of a friend.

“ Leave me to rage, despair, and shame, and wrongs ;

“ Leave me to seek myself—and shun mankind.”

[*Exit Orasmin.*]

Who am I ?—Heav'n ! Who am I ? What resolve !
Zara ! Nerestan ! sound these words like names

Decreed to join ?—Why pause I ?—Perish Zara——
Would I could tear her image from my heart :
“ ’Twere happier not to live at all, than live
“ Her scorn, the sport of an ungrateful false one !
“ And sink the sov’reign in a woman’s property.”

Re-enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin !—Friend ! return, I cannot bear
This absence from thy reason : ’twas unkind, 100
’Twas cruel to obey me, thus distress’d,
And wanting pow’r to think, when I had lost thee.
How goes the hour ? Has he appear’d, this rival ?
Perish the shameful sound——This villain Christian !
Has he appear’d below ?

Oras. Silent and dark,
Th’ unbreathing world is hush’d, as if it heard,
And listened to your sorrows.

Orsm. Oh, treach’rous night !
Thou lend’st thy ready veil to ev’ry treason,
And teeming mischiefs thrive beneath thy shade.

“ Orasmin, prophet, reason, truth, and love !
“ After such length of benefits, to wrong me !
“ How have I over-rated, how mistaken,
“ The merit of her beauty !—Did I not
“ Forget I was a monarch ? Did I remember
“ That Zara was a slave ?——I gave up all ;
“ Gave up tranquility, distinction, pride,
“ And fell the shameful victim of my love !

“ *Oras.* Sir, Sovereign, Sultan, my Imperial
Master !

" Reflect on your own greatness,

" The distant provocation."

Osm. Hark ! Heardst thou nothing ?

Oraf. My lord !

Osm. A voice, like dying groans !

Oraf. I listen, but can hear nothing.

Osm. Again!—look out—he comes——

Oraf. Nor tread of mortal foot—nor voice I hear :

The still seraglio lies, profoundly plung'd

In death-like silence! nothing stirs.—The air

Is soft, as infant sleep, no breathing wing

Steals through the shadows, to awaken night.

Osm. Horrors a thousand times more dark than
these,

Benight my suff'ring soul——Thou dost not know

'To what excess of tenderness I lov'd her :

I knew no happiness, but what she gave me,

Nor could have felt a mis'ry but for her !

Pity this weakness——mine are tears, Orasmin,

That fall not oft, nor lightly.——

Oraf. Tears !——Oh, Heaven ! 140

" *Osm.* The first which ever yet unmann'd my
eyes !

" Oh ! pity Zara——pity me——Orasmin,

" These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood."

Oraf. Oh, my unhappy lord!—I tremble for you—

Osm. Do—tremble at my sufferings, at my love ;

At my revenge too, tremble——for 'tis due,

And will not be deluded.

Oraf. Hark ! I hear

The steps of men, along the neighb'ring wall !

Osm. Fly—seize him—'tis Nereftan! Wait no chains,
But drag him down to my impatient eye.

[*Exit Orafmin.*]

Enter ZARA and SELIMA, in the dark.

Zar. Where art thou, Selima? Give me thy hand.
It is so dark, I tremble as I step,
With fears and startings, never felt till now!

Osm. Damnation! 'tis her voice! the well-known
sound,

That has so often charm'd me into baseness!

“ Oh, the perfidious hypocrite! —she goes

“ To meet th' inviting infidel! —now, now,”

[*Drawing a dagger.*]

Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes;—

Revenge! On whom?—No matter—Earth and

Heaven

160

Would blush, should I forbear: now—Zara, now!

[*Drops the Dagger.*]

I must not, cannot strike, the starting steel,

Unwilling, flies my hand, and shuns to wound her.

Zar. This is the private path—come nearer, lead
me——

Are we not notic'd, think'st thou?

Sel. Fear not, madam;

It cannot now be long, ere we shall meet him,

Osm. That word has given me back my ebbing
rage——

[*Recovers the dagger.*]

Zar. I walk in terror, and my heart forebodes.
Who's there?—Nereftan! Is it you?—O welcome——

Ofm. [*Stabbing her.*] This to thy heart——'Tis
not the traitor meets thee,

'Tis the betray'd—who writes it in thy blood.

Zar. Oh, gracious Heaven! receive my parting
soul,

And take thy trembling servant to thy mercy——

[*Dies.*

Ofm. Soul!—then revenge has reach'd thee—I will
now

Haſte from this fatal place—I cannot leave her!

Whom did I ſtrike? Was this the act of love?

Swallow me, earth!—She's ſilent—Zara's dead!

And ſhould I live to ſee returning day, 79

'Twill ſhew me but her blood!—ſhew me left joy-
leſs,

In a wide, empty world, with nothing round me,

But penitence and pain—And yet, 'twas juſt:—

Hark!—Deſtiny has ſent her lover to me,

To fill my vengeance, and reſtore my joy.

Enter ORASMIN with NERESTAN.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd! come
near——

Thou who, in gratitude for freedom gain'd,

Haſt giv'n me miſeries beyond thy own!

Thou heart of hero with a traitor's ſoul!

“Go—reap thy due reward, prepare to ſuffer,

“Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,

“To make thee feel thy death, and perſh ſlow.”

Are my commands obey'd?

Oraſ. All is prepar'd.

Osm. Thy wanton eyes look round, in search of her
Whose love, descending to a slave like thee,
From my dishonour'd hand receiv'd her doom.
See ! where she lies——

Ner. Oh, fatal, rash mistake !

Osm. Dost thou behold her, slave ?

Ner. Unhappy sister !

200

Osm. Sister !——Didst thou say sister ? If thou
didst,

Bless me with deafness, Heaven !

Ner. Tyrant ! I did——

She was my sister——All that now is left thee,
Dispatch——From my distracted heart drain next
The remnant of the royal Christian blood :
Old Lusignan, expiring in my arms,
Sent his too wretched son, with his last blessing,
To his now murder'd daughter !——
Would I had seen the bleeding innocent !
I would have liv'd to speak to her in death ;
Would have awaken'd in her languid heart,
A livelier sense of her abandon'd God :
That God, who left by her, forsook her too,
And gave the poor lost sufferer to thy rage.

Osm. Thy sister !——Lusignan her father——Selima !
Can this be true ?——and have I wrong'd thee, Zara ?

Sel. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her and
Heav'n !

Osm. Be dumb——for thou art base, to add distraction

To my already more than bleeding heart. 220
And was thy love sincere ?——What then remains ?

Ner. Why should a tyrant hesitate on murder !
There now remains but mine, of all the blood
Which, through thy father's cruel reign and thine,
Has never ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands.
Restore a wretch to his unhappy race ;
Nor hope that torments, after such a scene,
Can force one feeble groan to feast thy anger.
I waste my fruitless words in empty air ;
The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound he made,
Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.

Osm. Oh, Zara !——

Oraf. Alas, my lord, return—whither would grief
Transport your gen'rous heart ?——This Christian
dog——

Osm. Take off his fetters, and observe my will :
To him, and all his friends, give instant liberty :
Pour a profusion of the richest gifts
On these unhappy Christians ; and when heap'd
With vary'd benefits, and charg'd with riches,
Give 'em safe conduct to the nearest port. 240

Oraf. But, Sir——

Osm. Reply not, but obey.——
Fly—nor dispute thy master's last command,
Thy prince, who orders—and thy friend, who loves
thee !

Go—lose no time—farewell—begone—and thou !
Unhappy warrior—yet less lost than I——
Haste from our bloody land—and to thy own,
Convey this poor, pale object of my rage.
Thy king, and all his Christians, when they hear
Thy miseries, shall mourn 'em with their tears ;
But, if thou tell'st 'em mine, and tell'st 'em truly,

They who shall hate my crime, shall pity me.
Take, too, this poniard with thee, which my hand
Has stain'd with blood far dearer than my own ;
Tell 'em—with this I murder'd her I lov'd ;
The noblest and most virtuous among women &
The soul of innocence, and pride of truth :
Tell 'em I laid my empire at her feet :
Tell 'em I plung'd my dagger in her blood ;
Tell 'em, I so ador'd—and thus reveng'd her. 260

[*Stabs himself.*

Rev'rence this hero—and conduct him safe. [*Dies.*

Ner. Direct me, great inspirer of the soul !
How should I act, how judge in this distress ?
Amazing grandeur ! and detested rage !
Ev'n I, amidst my tears, admire this foe,
And mourn his death, who liv'd to give me woe.

[*Exeunt omnes.*



EPILOGUE.

*HERE, take a surfeit, Sirs, of being jealous,
And shun the pains that plague those Turkish fellows :
Where love and death join hands, their darts confounding :
Save us, good Heaven, from this new way of wounding.
Curs'd climate ! where to cards a lone-left woman
Has only one of her black guards to summon !
Sighs, and sits mop'd, with her tame beast to gaze at :
And that cold treat, is all the game she plays at !
For, should she once some abler hand be trying,
Poniard's the word ! and the first deal is—dying !*

*'Slife ! shou'd the bloody whim get ground in Britain,
Where woman's freedom has such heights to sit on ;
Dagger, provok'd, would bring on desolation :
And murder'd belles unpeople half the nation !——*

*Fain would I hope this play, to move compassion ;
And live to hunt suspicion out of fashion.——
Four motives strongly recommend the lover's
Hate of this weakness that our scene discovers.*

*First then—A woman will, or won't—depend on't.
If she will do't, she will :—and, there's an end on't.
But, if she won't—since safe and sound your trust is,
Fear is affront : and jealousy injustice.*

*Next,—be who bids his dear do what she pleases,
Blunts wedlock's edge ; and all its torture eases :*

*For—not to feel your suff'rings, is the same
As not to suffer :—All the diff'rence—name.*

*Thirdly—The jealous husband wrongs his honour ;
No wife goes lame, without some hurt upon her :
And the malicious world will still be guessing,
Who oft dines out, dislikes her own cook's dressing.*

*Fourth and lastly,—to conclude my lecture,
If you would fix the inconstant wife—respect her.
She who perceives her virtues over-rated,
Will fear to have the account more justly stated :
And borrowing, from her pride, the good wife's seeming,
Grow really such—to merit your esteeming.*

A
COMIC CHORUS;
OR,
INTERLUDES,
DESIGNED TO BE SUNG BETWEEN THE ACTS OF
ZARA.

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. BEARD, and Mrs. CLIVE, from opposite entrances.

She. SO, Sir,—you're a man of your word.

He. *Who would break it, when summon'd by you?*

She. *Very fine that—but pray have you heard,
What it is you are summon'd to do?*

He. *Not a word—but expected to see
Something new in the musical way.*

She. *Why, this author has cast you and me,
As a Prologue, it seems, to his play.*

He. *What then is its tuneful name,
Robinhood of the Greenwood tree?
Or what good old ballad of fame
Has he built into tra-ge-dy?*

She. *Tho' he rails against songs, he thought fit,
Most gravely to urge and implore us,
In aid of his tragical wit,
To creë ourselves into a Chorus? [Laughing.*

He. *A Chorus ! what's that—a composing
Of groans, to the rants of his madness ?*

She. *No—he hinders the boxes from dozing,
By mixing some spirit with sadness.*

He. *So then—'tis our task, I suppose,
To sing sober sense into relish.
Strike up, at each tragical close,
And unheeded moral embellish.*

She. *'Twas the custom, you know, once in Greece,
And if here 'tis not witty, 'tis new.*

He. *Well then, when you find an act cease,*
[Turning to the Boxes.

Tremble ladies——

She. *And, gentlemen, too——* [To the men.
If I give not the beaux good advice, [Merrily.
Let me dwindle to recitative !

He. *Nor will I to the belles be more nice,
When I catch 'em, but here, to receive.*

She. *If there's ought to be learnt from the play,
I shall sit in a nook, here, behind,
Popping out in the good ancient way,
Now and then, with a piece of my mind.*

He. *But suppose, that no mora' should rise,
Worth the ears of the brave or the fair !*

She. *Why, we'll then give the word—and advise——
Face about, and stand all as ye were.*

••••• AFTER THE FIRST ACT. •••••

Song in Duet.

He. THE Sultan's a bridegroom—the slaves are set free.

And none must presume to wear fetters but he !

Before honey-moon,

Love's fiddle's in tune ;

So we think (filly souls !) 'tis always to be :

For the man that is blind—how should he foresee !

She. I hate these hot blades, who so fiercely begin ;
To baulk a rais'd hope is a cowardly sin !

The maid that is wise, let her always procure

Rather a grave than a spirited woer :

What she loses at breakfast, at supper she'll win.

But your amorous violence never endures :

For to dance without doors

Is the way to be weary, before we get in.

He. Pray how does it happen, that passion so gay,

Blooms, fades, and falls away,

Like the rose of this morn, that at night must decay ?

Woman, I fear,

Does one thing appear,

But is found quite another, when look'd on too near.

She. Ah—no—

Not—so—

'Tis the fault of you men, who, with flames of desire

Set your palates on fire,

And dream not, that eating—will appetite tire ;

So resolve in your heat,
 To do nothing, but eat,
 'Till, alas ! on a sudden—you sleep o'er your meat !
 Therefore, learn, O ye fair !——

He. And, you lovers, take care——

She. That you trust not before-hand——

He. That you trust not at all.

She. Man was born to deceive.

He. Woman form'd to believe.

Both. Trust not one of us all !

For to stand on sure ground is the way not to fall.

AFTER THE SECOND ACT.

Mrs. CLIVE (sola) to a flute.

I.

OH, jealousy ! thou bane of bleeding love ?

Ah, how unhappy we !

Doom'd by the partial powers above,

Eternal slaves to thee !

Not more untaid than lovers' hearts the wind !

This moment dying—and the next unkind.

Ah ! wavering, weak desires of frail mankind !

With pleading passion ever to pursue,

Yet triumph, only to undo.

II.

Go to the deeps, below, thou joyless fiend,

And never rise again to sow despair !

Nor you, ye heedless fair, occasions lend,
To blast your blooming hopes, and bring on care.
Never conclude your innocence secure,
Prudence alone makes love endure.

[As she is going off, he meets her, and pulls her back, detaining her, while he sings what follows.]

He. Ever, ever, doubt the fair in sorrow,
Mourning, as if they felt compassion :
Yet what they weep for to-day—to-morrow,
They'll be first to laugh into fashion.
None are betray'd, if they trust not the charmer ;
Jealousy guards the weak from falling ;
Would you never catch—you must oft alarm her,
Hearts to deceive is a woman's calling.

[After the song, he lets her go, and they join in a duet.]

She. Come let us be friends, and no longer abuse,
Condemn, and accuse,
Each other.

He. Would you have us agree, you must fairly
confess,
The love we carefs,
We smother.

She. I am loth to think that——

He. Yet, you know, it is true ;

She. Well—what if I do,
No matter.

He. Could you teach us a way to love on, without
strife ?

She. Suit the first part of life
To the latter.

He. 'Tis an honest advice ; for when love is new
blown,
Gay colours are shown,
Too glaring.

She. Then alas, for poor wives !—comes a blustering
day,
And blows 'em away,
Most scaring !

AFTER THE THIRD ACT.

By Mr. BEARD alone.

MARK, oh, ye beauties !—gay, and young,
Mark the painful woes and weeping,
That from forc'd concealment sprung,
Punish the sin of secret-keeping.
Tell then—nor veil a willing heart,
When the lover, lov'd alarms it ;
But—to sooth the pleasing smart,
Whisper the glowing wish that warms it.
She that would hide the gentle flame,
Does but teach her hope to languish ;
She that boldly tells her aim,
Flies from the path that leads to anguish.
Not that too far your trust should go ;
All that you say—to all discover ;
All that you do—but two should know,
One of 'em you, and one your lover.
[She meets him going off.

She. Ah! man, thou wert always a traitor,
 Thou giv'st thy advice to betray;
 Ah! form'd for a rover by nature,
 Thou leader of love the wrong way.
 Would women let women advise them,
 They could not so easily stray,
 'Tis trusting to lovers supplies 'em
 With will and excuse to betray.
 She's safe, who, in guard of her passion,
 Far, far, from confessing her pain,
 Keeps silence, in spite of the fashion,
 Nor suffers her eyes to explain.

AFTER THE FOURTH ACT.

Duet.

She. WELL, what do you think——of these sorrows
 and joys,
 These calms, and these whirlwinds——this silence and
 noise?
 Which love, in the bosom of man, employs?
He. For my part, would lovers be govern'd by me,
 Not one of you women so wish'd-for should be.
 Since here we a proof of your mischief see.
She. Why, what would you do to escape the distress?
He. I would do—I would do—by my soul I can't
 guess—
She. Poor wretch, by my soul, I imagin'd no less.

Come, come—let me tell you, these tempests of love,
Did but blow up desire, its briskness to prove,
Which else would—you know—too lazily move.
Were women like logs of a make to lie still,
Men would sleep and grow dull—but our absolute will
Sets life all a whirling, like wheels in a mill.

He. Ambition in woman, like valour in man,
Tempts danger—from which they'd be safe if they
ran :

And once get 'em in—get 'em out how you can.

She. Pray, what will you give me to teach you the
trick,

To keep your wife pleas'd, either healthy or sick ?

He. The man who hits that, sure, must touch to
the quick !

She. Learn this—and depend on a life without pain,
Say nothing to vex her, yet let her complain ;
Submit to your fate—and disturb not her reign :
Be mop'd when she's sad—and be pleas'd when she's
gay,

Believe her, and trust her—and give her—her way :

For want of this rule—there's the devil to pay.

Both. For want of this rule—there's the devil to
pay.





THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

Dublin: Published by W. Jones, 27 St. James Street.



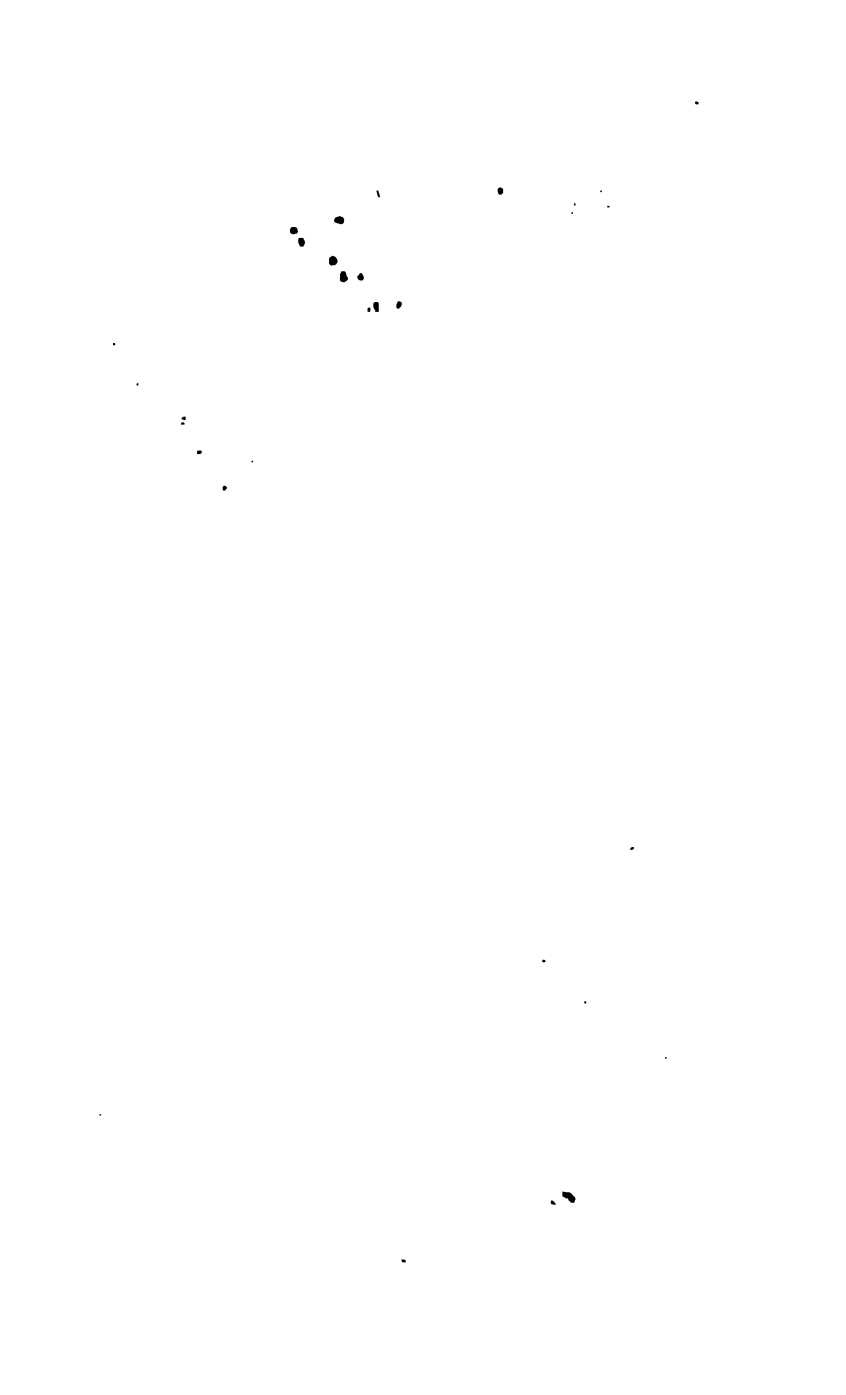
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Carleton 1713

Dublin Published by W. Jones N. 26. Dame Street.



VENICE PRESERVED.

OR,

A PLOT DISCOVERED.

A

TRAGEDY.

BY THOMAS OTWAY,

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Managers.

“ The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation. ”

DUBLIN :

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL,
FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 86, DAME-STREET.

MDCCLCI.



TO HER GRACE
THE
DUTCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH.

MADAM,

WERE it possible for me to let the world know, how entirely your Grace's goodness has devoted a poor man to your service : were there words enough in speech to express the mighty sense I have of your great bounty towards me ; surely I should write and talk of it for ever : but your Grace has given me so large a theme, and laid so very vast a foundation, that Imagination wants stock to build upon it. I am as one dumb, when I would speak of it : and, when I strive to write, I want a scale of thought sufficient to comprehend the height of it. Forgive me, then, Madam, if (as a poor peasant once made a present of an apple to an Emperor) I bring this small tribute, the humble growth of my little garden, and lay it at your feet. Believe it is paid you with the utmost gratitude : believe, that, so long as I have thought to remember how very much I owe your very generous nature, I will ever have a heart that shall be grateful for it too. Your Grace, next Heaven, deserves it amply from me : that gave me life, but on a hard condition, till your extended favour taught me to prize the gift, and took the heavy burthen it was clogged with from me, I mean hard

Aij

fortune. When I had enemies, that with malicious power kept back and shaded me from those royal beams, whose warmth is all I have, or hope to live by ; your noble pity and compassion found me, where I was cast backward from my blessing, down in the rear of fortune, called me up, placed me in the shine, and I have felt its comfort. You have in that restored me to my native right : for a steady faith, and loyalty to my Prince, was all the inheritance my father left me ; and, however hardly my ill fortune deal with me, 'tis what I prize so well, that I never pawn'd it yet, and hope I shall never part with it. Nature and Fortune were certainly in league, when you were born ; and as the first took care to give you beauty enough to enslave the hearts of all the world ; so the other resolv'd to do its merit justice, that none but a monarch fit to rule the world should e'er possess it ; and in it had an empire. The young prince you have given him, by his blooming virtues, early declares the mighty stock he came from : and as you have taken all the pious care of a dear mother, and a prudent guardian, to give him a noble and generous education ; may it succeed according to his merits and your wishes : may he grow up to be a bulwark to his illustrious father, and a patron to his loyal subjects ; with wisdom and learning to assist him, whenever called to his councils ; to defend his right against the incroachment of republicans in his senates ; to cherish such men as shall be able to vindicate the royal cause ; that good and fit servants to the crown may never be lost, for want of a protector. May he have courage and conduct fit to fight his battles abroad, and terrify his rebels at home : and, that all these may be yet more sure, may he

DEDICATION.

never, during the spring time of his years, when those growing virtues ought with care to be cherish'd, in order to their ripening, may he never meet with vicious natures, or the tongues of faithless, sordid, insipid flatterers, to blast 'em. To conclude, may he be as great as the hand of Fortune (with his honour) shall be able to make him; and may your Grace, who are so good a mistress, and so noble a patroness, never meet with a less grateful servant, than,

Madam,

Your Grace's

Entirely devoted Creature,

THO. OTWAY.

THOMAS OTWAY.

LITTLE is with any certainty known of the great Author of *VENICE PRESERVED*.—In the licentious days of Charles II. it is believed neither the *virtues* nor the *vices* of OTWAY were sufficiently prominent to distinguish him.

His father, Mr. HUMPHREY OTWAY, was the Rector of *Wolbeding* in Suffex—THOMAS the poet was born on the 3d of March, 1651. He was first sent to *Wickeham* School, and thence removed to Christ-Church, Oxford, of which he became a Commoner in 1669.

On leaving the University, the *histrionic* frenzy possessed him—He found the bent of his mind led him to the Theatre, but he mistook the part he was to perform there: instead of exciting emotions himself upon a stage, he was to furnish others with a *cue for passion*, as long as the language he spoke should exist. He made as an

Actor but one attempt, and in that he is said to have failed.

The army and Otway had as little congenial between them—He served in Flanders, but, versatile and facile, he soon became disgusted, and at length resolved to write for the Players—How well he succeeded, is impressed upon every heart.

Imprudence, however, is said to have left him never above want, and sometimes, it is reported, had plunged him into all its severities. We hear continually an idle reproach upon the ingratitude of an age which can suffer the indigence of Genius. But it should be considered that, for the most part, such dilemmas are voluntary inflictions, and that he has slender claims upon the sympathy of men, whom calamity cannot make wise, and whom pride prevents from soliciting relief.

OTWAY died in 1685; but, it is hoped, the wretched fate said to have attended him is fictitious—Nothing, however, can with any certainty be advanced respecting his *end*.

Few of the Professors of Literature offer so striking an example as Otway of the sublime

pre-eminence, and indiscreet abasement of
GENIUS.

His Productions are as follow :—

Alcibiades,	Caius Marius,
Don Carlos,	Orphan,
Titus and Bernice,	Soldier's Fortune,
Cheats of Scapin,	Venice Preserved,
Friendship in Fashion,	Atheist.

VENICE PRESERVED;

OR,

A PLOT DISCOVERED.

Is a play evidently the result of acute remark upon the influence of passion on life. The Author seems to have consulted nature in his own mind, and unfortunately his own mind was corrupt.

Hence his characters, except indeed *Belvidera*, excite little sympathy at their fate.—The Traitor to his Country expires upon the wheel, and the Betrayer of his Friend is the *slayer of himself*.

In the works of some dramatists, there is danger lest Vice should wear the wreath of Virtue from the fascination of specious qualities—it is thus in the *School for Scandal*; where the character of Charles is a seducing *poison to our blood*.—Otway's Rascals are, however, sufficiently despised—PIERRE is sunken by cruel ambition—JAFFIER by meanness unmanly and contemptible. On the side of the *amor patriæ* he is paralytic—he can support the idea of destroying his Country, but poverty, the importunities of a wife, or

the reflections of treachery to a friend, agonize him with compunction and hurry him to despair.

BELVIDERA, unhappy, duteous, tender, and virtuous, claims our full commiseration, and claims it *alone*.

PROLOGUE.

*In these distracted times, when each man dreads
The bloody stratagems of busy heads :
Whence we had fear'd three years we know not what,
'Till witnesses began to die o' th' rot ;
What made our poet meddle with a plot ?
Was't that he fancy'd for the very sake
And name of plot, his trifling play might take ?
For there's not in't one inch-board evidence ;
But 'tis, he says, to reason plain and sense ;
And that he thinks a plausible defence.
Were truth by sense and reason to be try'd,
Sure all our swearers might be laid aside.
No ; of such tools our author has no need,
To make his plot, or make his play succeed ;
He of Black Bills has no prodigious tales,
Or Spanish pilgrims cast ashore in Wales :
Here's not one murder'd magistrate, at least,
Kept rank, like ven'son for a city feast,
Grown four days stiff, the better to prepare
And fit his pliant limbs to ride in chair.
Yet here's an army rais'd, tho' under ground,
But no man seen, nor one commission found :
Here is a traitor too, that's very old,
Turbulent, subtle, mischievous, and bold.*

*Bloody, revengeful, and—to crown his part,
Loves fumbling with a wench with all his heart :
Till, after having many changes past,
In spite of age (thanks t' heav'n) is hang'd at last ;
Next is a senator that keeps a whore,
In Venice none a bigger office bore,
To lewdness ev'ry night the leacher ran ;
Shew me, all London, such another man ;
Match him at Mother Cresswell's, if you can.
O Poland ! Poland ! had it been thy lot
T' have heard in time of his Venetian plot,
Thou surely chosen hadst one king from thence,
And honour'd them, as thou hast England since.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

				<i>Men.</i>
DUKE of VENICE	-	-	-	Mr. Chaplin.
PRIULI	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
BEDAMAR	-	-	-	Mr. R. Palmer.
JAFFIER	-	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
PIERRE	-	-	-	Mr. Bensley.
RENAULT	} Conspirators {	}		Mr. Packer.
ELLIOTT				Mr. Fawcett.
SPINOSA				Mr. Benfon.
THEODORE				Mr. Alfred.
				<i>Woman.</i>
BELVIDERA	-	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.

COVENT-GARDEN.

				<i>Men.</i>
DUKE of VENICE	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
PRIULI	-	-	-	Mr. Hull.
BEDAMAR	-	-	-	Mr. Davies.
JAFFIER	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
PIERRE	-	-	-	Mr. Harley.
RENAULT	} Conspirators	}		Mr. W. Powell.
ELLIOTT				Mr. Macready.
SPINOSA				Mr. Cubit.
THEODORE				Mr. Reeves.
				<i>Woman.</i>
BELVIDERA	-	-	-	Mrs. Effen.

Two Women, attendants on Belvidera.
The Council of ten.
Officer, Guard, Friar, Executioner, and Rabble.

VENICE PRESERVED.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Street in Venice. Enter PRIULI and JAFFIER.

Priuli.

NO more ! I'll hear no more ! Begone and leave me.

Jaf. Not hear me ! By my suffering but you shall !
My lord, my lord ! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me. Patience ! where's the distance
throws

Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, tho' proud oppression will not hear me ?

Pri. Have you not wrong'd me ?

Jaf. Could my nature e'er
Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself
To gain a hearing from a cruel father.
Wrong'd you !

Pri. Yes, wrong'd me ! In the nicest point,
The honour of my house, you've done me wrong,
You may remember (for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness) when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd
on,

By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation ;
Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you ;
Court'd, and fought to raise you to your merits : 20
My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
My very self was yours ; you might have us'd me
To your best service ; like an open friend
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine :
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me ;
Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
Oh Belvidera !

Jaf. 'Tis to me you owe her :
Childless you had been else, and in the grave
Your name extinct ; no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
The Adriatick wedded by our Duke ;
And I was with you : your unskilful pilot
Dash'd us upon a rock ; when to your boat
You made for safety : enter'd first your self ;
Th' affrighted Belvidera following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
Was, by a wave, wash'd off into the deep ;
When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
And buffeting the billows to her rescue,

Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine.
Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize.
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms :
Indeed you thank'd me ; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul : for from that hour she lov'd me,
'Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Pri. You stole her from me ; like a thief you stole
her,

At dead of night ! that curst hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false, like mine ;
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both ; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous : still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you ; till at last you find 60
The curse of disobedience all your portion.

Jaf. Half of your curse you have bestow'd in
vain ;

Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty :
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandfire,
And happier than his father.

Pri. Rather live

To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries ; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaf. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Pri. 'Twould, by heav'n !

" Once she was dear indeed ; the drops that fell
 " From my sad heart, when she forgot her duty,
 " The fountain of my life was not so precious—
 " But she is gone, and, if I am a man,
 " I will forget her."

Jaf. Would I were in my grave !

Pri. And she too with thee :

For, living here, you're but my curs'd remembran-
 cers. 80

I once was happy.

Jaf. You use me thus, because you know my soul
 Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
 My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.

Oh ! could my soul ever have known satiety ;
 Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
 As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
 But I might send her back to you with contumely,
 And court my fortune where she would be kinder ?

Pri. You dare not do't.

Jaf. Indeed, my Lord, I dare not.

My heart, that awes me, is too much my master :
 Three years are past, since first our vows were plighted,
 During which time, the world must bear me witness,
 I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
 The daughter of a senator of Venice :
 Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
 Due to her birth, she always has commanded.
 Out of my little fortune I've done this ;
 Because (tho' hopeless e'er to win your nature)
 The world might see I lov'd her for herself ;
 Not as the heirs of the great Priuli.

Pri. No more.

Jaf. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever.

There's not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
But's happier than me : for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty ; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd, but to a joyful morning :
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's wither'd in the
ripening.

Pri. Home, and be humble ; study to retrench ;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly :
Reduce the glitt'ring trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state :
Then, to some suburb cottage both retire ;
Drudge to feed loathsome life ; get brats and starve—
Home, home, I say.— [Exit.

Jaf. Yes, if my heart would let me——
This proud, this swelling heart : home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Fill'd and damm'd up with gaping creditors.
“ Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring.”
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin,
Oh ! Belvidera ! Oh ! she is my wife——
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. My friend, good morrow.
How fares the honest partner of my heart ?
What, melancholy ! not a word to spare me ?

Jaf. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damn'd starv-
ing quality,
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world.

Pier. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other ; lawyers would want prac-
tice,
Cut-throats rewards : each man would kill his
brother

Himself ; none would be paid or hang'd for murder.
Honesty ! 'twas a cheat invented first 142
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontroul'd above their betters.

Jaf. Then honesty is but a notion ?

Pier. Nothing else ;
Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd :
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't.
'Tis a ragged virtue : Honesty ! no more on't.

Jaf. Sure thou art honest ?

Pier. So, indeed, men think me ;
But they are mistaken, Jaffier : I am a rogue
As well as they ;
A fine, gay, bold-fac'd villain as thou seest me.

'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted ;
I steal from no man ; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed ; I'd not betray my friend
To get his place or fortune ; I scorn to flatter 160
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch be-
neath me ;

Yet, Jaffier, for all this I am a villain.

Jaff. A villain !

Pier. Yes, a most notorious villain ;

To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man : to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a shew
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters ;
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds ;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow ;
Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That make us slaves, and tell us, 'tis our charter.

Jaf. " Oh, Aquilina ! Friend to lose such beauty.

" The dearest purchase of thy noble labours !

" She was thy right by conquest, as by love. 180

Pier. " Oh ! Jaffier ! I had so fix'd my heart
upon her,

" That, wheresoe'er I fram'd a scheme of life,

" For time to come, she was my only joy,

" With which I wish'd to sweeten future cares :

" I fancy'd pleasures ; none but one that loves

" And doats as I did, can imagine like 'em :
 " When in th' extremity of all these hopes,
 " In the most charming hour of expectation,
 " Then, when our eager wishes soar'd the highest,
 " Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely game,
 " A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
 " With his foul wings, sail'd in, and spoil'd my quarry.

Jaf. " I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou
 hat'ft him.

Pier. " Curfe on the common good that's fo pro-
 tected,

" Where every slave, that heaps up wealth enough
 " To do much wrong, becomes the lord of right !
 " I, who believ'd no ill could e'er come near me,
 " Found in th' embraces of my Aquilina
 " A wretched, old, but itching fenator ;
 " A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title ; 200
 " A rogue that ufes beauty like a lamb-skin,
 " Barely to keep him warm ; that filthy cuckoo too
 " Was, in my abfence, crept into my nest,
 " And fpoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.

Jaf. " Didft thou not chafe him thence ?

Pier. " I did, and drove

" The rank old bearded Hirco ftinking home.
 " The matter was complain'd of in the fenate,
 " I fummon'd to appear, and cenfur'd bafely,
 " For violating something they call'd privilege——
 " This was the recompence of all my fervice.
 " Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward !
 " A foldier's miftrefs, Jaffier, is his religion ;
 " When that's profan'd, all other ties are broken :
 " That even diffolves all former bonds of fervice ;

“ And from that hour I think myself as free
 “ To be the foe, as e’er the friend of Venice—
 “ Nay, dear revenge, whene’er thou call’st I’m
 ready.”

Jaf. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
 And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live 220
 In such a wretched state as this of Venice,
 Where all agree to spoil the public good ;
 And villains fatten with the brave man’s labours.

Pier. We’ve neither safety, unity, nor peace,
 For the foundation’s lost of common good ;
 Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us ;
 The laws (corrupted to their ends that make ’em)
 Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
 That ev’ry day starts up, t’ enslave us deeper.
 Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
 To do it right, Oh, Jaffier ! then might’st thou
 Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face ;
 The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
 And learn to value such a son as thou art.
 I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaf. Curs’d be the cause, tho’ I thy friend be part
 on’t :

Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
 For I am us’d to mis’ry, and perhaps
 May find a way to sweeten ’t to thy spirit.

Pier. Too soon ’twill reach thy knowledge—

Jaf. Then from thee 241
 Let it proceed. There’s virtue in thy friendship,
 Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
 Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.

Pier. Then thou art ruin’d !

Jaf. That I long since knew ;
I and ill fortune have been long acquainted.

Pier. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains ;
The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune :
Nay, more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it.
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face,
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale ;
There was another making villanous jests
At thy undoing : he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient, most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings intermix'd and wrought with gold ;
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Receiv'd thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaf. Now thank heaven——

Pier. Thank heaven ! for what ?

Jaf. That I'm not worth a ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of
Venice,

Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false ;
Where there's no truth, no trust ; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,

" Shining thro' tears, like April-suns in showers,
" That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em ;
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she lean'd,
Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her ; 280
Ev'n the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her ;
Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity ;
I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues : they pleas'd
me.

Jaf. I thank thee for this story, from my soul ;
Since now I know the worst that can befall me.
Ah, Pierre ! I have a heart that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me ;
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward : bear my weakness :
If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh ! I shall drown thee with my sorrows.

Pier. Burn,
First, burn and level Venice to thy ruin.
What ! starve, like beggar's brats, in frosty weather,
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death !
Thou or thy cause, shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee :
Command my heart, thou'rt every way its master.

Jaf. No, there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad ;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow :
Revenge, the attribute of gods ; they stamp'd it,
With their great image, on our natures. Die !

Consider well the cause, that calls upon thee :
And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember,
Thy Belvidera suffers ; Belvidera !
Die—damn first—What ! be decently interr'd
In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues, that rot in winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o' th' soil !

Jaf. Oh !

Pier. Well said, out with't, swear a little——

Jaf. Swear ! By sea and air ; by earth, by Heav'n
and hell,

I will revenge my Belvidera's tears.

Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator.

Pier. A dog.

Jaf. Agreed.

320

Pier. Shoot him.

Jaf. With all my heart.

No more ; where shall we meet at night ?

Pier. I'll tell thee ;

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,

I take my evening's walk of meditation ;

There we two will meet, and talk of precious
Mischief——

Jaf. Farewel.

Pier. At twelve.

Jaf. At any hour ; my plagues

Will keep me waking.

[*Exit Pierre.*]

Tell me why, good Heaven,

Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,

Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,

That fill the happiest man ? Ah, rather, why

Didst thou not form me 'fornid as my fate,

Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burthens ?
 Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me ?
 Is this just dealing, Nature ?—Belvidera !

Enter BELVIDERA.

Poor Belvidera !

Bel. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
 To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge !
 Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face !
 My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
 At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.
 Oh smile ! as when our loves were in their spring,
 And chear my fainting soul.

Jaf. As when our loves
 Were in their spring ! Has then our fortune chang'd ?
 Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,
 Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee ?
 If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour ?
 Where ease my loaded heart ? Oh ! where complain ?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love de-
 caying,
 When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
 With all the resolution of strong truth !
 Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarm thine
 To a new charge of bliss ?—I joy more in thee,
 Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,
 And blest the Gods for all her travail past.

Jaf. Can there in woman be such glorious faith ?
 Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false !
 Oh woman ! lovely woman ! Nature made thee
 To temper man : we had been brutes without you !

Angels are painted fair to look like you :
There's in you all that we believe of Heaven ;
Amazing brightness, purity and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich ;
I have so much, my heart will surely break with't :
Vows can't express it. When I would declare
How great's my joy, I'm dumb with the big thought ;
I swell, and sigh, and labour with my longing.
O ! lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high Heavens, and ev'ry lift'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught ;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee, 380
Give loose to love, with kisses kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

Jaf. Oh, Belvidera ! doubly I'm a beggar :
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want, worldly want, that hungry meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chafes me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger ? Can these limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty ?
When banish'd by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour ; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads ;
Wilt thou then talk thus to me ? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love ?

Bel. Oh ! I will love thee, even in madness love thee ;

Tho' my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart 400
Should 'swage itself, and be let loose to thine.

Tho' the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some cleft our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head ;
And, as thou sighing ly'st, and swell'd with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest ;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

Jaf. Hear this, you Heav'ns ! and wonder how
you made her :

Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquility and happiness like mine !
Like gaudy ships th' obsequious billows fall,
And rise again, to lift you in your pride ;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you ;
I, in my private bark already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant driven to unknown land,
That had by chance pack'd up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that ;
Since I must wander further on the shore, 420
Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
Resolv'd to scorn and trust my fate no more. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

“ Enter PIERRE and AQUILINA.

“ Aquilina.

*“ By all thy wrongs, thou’rt dearer to my arms
“ Than all the wealth of Venice. Pr’ythee stay,
“ And let us love to-night.”*

*“ Pier. No : there’s fool,
“ There’s fool about thee. When a woman sells
“ Her flesh to fools, her beauty’s lost to me ;
“ They leave a taint, a sully—where they’ve pass’d ;
“ There’s such a baneful quality about ’em,
“ E’en spoils complexions with their nauseousness ;
“ They infect all they touch : I cannot think
“ Of tasting any thing a fool has pall’d.*

*“ Aquil. I loath and scorn that fool thou mean’st, as
much*

*“ Or more than thou canst ; but the beast has gold,
“ That makes him necessary ; power too,
“ To qualify my character, and poise me
“ Equal with peevish virtue, that beholds
“ My liberty with envy. In their hearts
“ They’re loose as I am ; but an ugly power
“ Sits in their faces, and frights pleasure from
them.*

“ *Pier.* Much good may’t do you, madam, with
your senator. 20

“ *Aqui.* My senator ! Why, canst thou think that
wretch

“ E’er fill’d thy Aquilina’s arms with pleasure ?

“ Think’st thou, because I sometimes give him
leave

“ To foil himself at what he is unfit for ;

“ Because I forc’d myself t’ endure and suffer him,

“ Think’st thou, I love him ? No, by all the joys

“ Thou ever gav’st me, his presence is my penance.

“ The worst thing an old man can be ’s a lover,

“ A mere *memento mori* to poor woman.

“ I never lay by his decrepid side,

“ But all that night I ponder on my grave.

“ *Pier.* Would he were well sent thither.

“ *Aqui.* That’s my wish too :

“ For then, my Pierre, I might have cause, with
pleasure,

“ To play the hypocrite. Oh ! how I could weep

“ Over the dying dotard, and kiss him too,

“ In hopes to smother him quite ; then, when the time

“ Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral,

“ (For he has already made me heir to treasures

“ Would make me out-act a real widow’s whining)

“ How could I frame my face to fit my mourning !

“ With wringing hands attend him to his grave ;

“ Fall swooning on his hearse ; take mad possession

“ E’en of the dismal vault, where he lay buried ;

“ There, like th’ Ephesian matron, dwell, till thou,

“ My lovely soldier, com’st to my deliverance ;

" Then, throwing up my veil, with open arms

" And laughing eyes, run to new-dawning joy.

" *Pier.* No more : I've friends to meet me here
to-night,

" And must be private. As you prize my friendship,

" Keep up your coxcomb ; let him not pry, nor listen,

" Nor frisk about the house, as I have seen him,

" Like a tame mumping squirrel with a bell on ;

" Curs will be abroad to bite him, if you do.

" *Aqui.* What friends to meet ! Mayn't I be of
your council ?

" *Pier.* How ! a woman ask questions out of bed !

" Go to your senator ; ask him what passes

" Amongst his brethren ; he'll hide nothing from
you :

" But pump me not for politics. No more !

" Give order, that whoever in my name 60

" Comes here, receive admittance. So good night.

" *Aqui.* Must we ne'er meet again ! embrace no
more ?

" Is love so soon and utterly forgotten ?

" *Pier.* As you henceforward treat your fool, I'll
think on't.

" *Aqui.* Curs'd be all fools—I die, if he forsakes
me ;

" And how to keep him, Heaven or hell instruct me."

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Rialto. Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night
around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay surely 'tis so with me! —
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids me not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk.
Sure I'm so curs'd that, tho' of Heav'n forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell, hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Sure I've staid too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my profelyte.
Speak, who goes there?

Jaf. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he, that asks the question?

Pier. A friend to dogs, for they are honest crea-
tures,
And ne'er betray their masters: never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend:
Jaffier!

Jaf. The same. "O Pierre, thou'rt come in season,
"I was just going to pray.

Pier. "Ah ; that's mechanic ;
"Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by't, too.
"No praying ; it spoils business, and time's precious.

Where's Belvidera ?——

Jaf. For a day or two
I've lodg'd her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do for me. Pr'ythee, friend,
If thou would'st have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera——

Pier. Not of her !

Jaf. Oh, no !

Pier. Not name her ? May be I wish her well. 100

Jaf. Whom well ?

Pier. Thy wife ; thy lovely Belvidera.
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done.

Jaf. Y'are merry, Pierre.

Pier. I am so :

Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile :
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins ;
Marriage is chargeable. [Gives him a purse]

Jaf. I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already. Well !
What must this buy ? Rebellion, murder, treason !
Tell me, which way I must be damn'd for this.

Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like
these,

But entertain'd each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world

Reform'd since our last meeting? What new miracles
Have happen'd? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?

Jaf. Kind Heav'n, let heavy curses
Gall his old age; cramps, aches rack his bones,
And bitterest disquiet ring his heart.
"Oh! let him live, till life become his burden:
"Let him groan under't long, linger an age
"In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
"And find its ease, but late."

Pier. Nay, could'st thou not
As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

Jaf. But curses stick not: Could I kill with
curfing,
By Heaven I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted. Senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills: "But their wives and
daughters
"Die of their own diseases." Oh! for a curse
To kill with!

Pier. Daggers, daggers are much better.

Jaf. Ha!

Pier. Daggers.

Jaf. But where are they?

Pier. Oh! a thousand

140

May be dispos'd of, in honest hands, in Venice.

Jaf. Thou talk'st in clouds.

Pier. But yet a heart, half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffier.

There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't;
Openly act a deed the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaf. For liberty!

Pier. For liberty, my friend.

Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again : 180
I shall be free from those opprobrious wrongs,
That press me now, and bend my spirit down-
ward;

All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right: fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat: those baleful unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perch'd near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

Jaf. What can I do?

Pier. Canst thou not kill a senator?

Jaf. Were there one wife or honest, I could kill
him,

For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had; and the brave story warms me.

Pier. Swear then!

Jaf. I do, by all those glittering stars,
And yon great ruling planet of the night;
By all good pow'rs above, and ill below;
By love and friendship, dearer than my life, 200
No pow'r or death shall make me false to thee.

Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
 A council's held hard by, where the destruction
 Of this great empire's hatching : there I'll lead thee.
 But be a man ! for thou'rt to mix with men
 Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
 And rule it when it's wildest——

Jaf. I give thee thanks
 For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man ;
 And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou see'st my
 fears

Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
 Out of my breast, and shew it for a coward's.
 Come, let's be gone, for from this hour I chase
 All little thoughts, all tender human follies
 Out of my bosom : Vengeance shall have room :
 Revenge !

Pier. And liberty !

Jaf. Revenge ! revenge——— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Changes to Aquilina's House, the Greek Courtesan.

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition ? the worst
 ground
 A wretch can build on ! It's, indeed at distance, 220
 A goodly prospect, tempting to the view ;

The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to Heav'n,
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us
Who's there ?

Enter SPINOSA.

Spin. Renault, good-morrow, for by this time
I think the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning? Has the clock struck
twelve ?

Ren. Yes ; Clocks will go as they are set : but man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain :
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance ; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.

Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten.

Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone ?
Why are we not together ?

Enter ELIOT.

O, Sir, welcome !

You are an Englishman : when treason's hatching.
One might have thought you'd not have been behind-
hand.

241

In what whore's lap have you been lolling ?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef, and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.

Eli. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How !

*Enter BEDAMAR the Ambassador, THEODORE, BRAM-
VEIL, DURAND, BRABE, REVILLIDO, MEZZANA,
TERNON, RETROSI, Conspirators.*

Bed. At difference ; fie !

Is this a time for quarrels ? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl : should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly as in one great jewel,
T' adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on ;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles ?

Ren. Boys !

Bed. Renault, thy hand.

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here ;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Ben. Eliot, thou once had'st virtue. I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bent with god-like goodness,
Not half thus courted : 'Tis thy nation's glory
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
One more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace.
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
Totters not it already ?

Eli. Would 'twere tumbling.

Bed. Nay, it shall down ; this night we seal its
ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

Oh, Pierre ! thou art welcome.
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. Oh, my Mars !
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Sure prophesy'd of thee.

Pier. Friend, was not Brutus,
(I mean that Brutus, who in open senate
Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world)
A gallant man ? 289

Ren. Yes, and Catiline too ;
Tho' story wrong his fame : for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country :
His cause was good.

Bed. And our's as much above it,
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

Pier. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start ? or must we talk for ever ?

Bed. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth ; fate seems
to have set
The business up, and given it to our care ;
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But is firm and ready.

All. All.
We'll die with Bedamar.

Bed. O men
Matchless ! as will your glory be hereafter :

The game is for a matchless prize, if won ;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Ren. What can lose it ?

" The public stock's a beggar ; one Venetian
" Trusts not another. Look into their stores
" Of general safety ; empty magazines,
" A tatter'd fleet, a murmuring unpaid army,
" Bankrupt nobility, a harrafs'd commonalty,
" A factious, giddy, and divided senate,
" Is all the strength of Venice : let's destroy it ;
" Lets fill their magazines with arms to awe them ;
" Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain
 it ;
" Let loose the murmuring army on their masters,
" To pay themselves with plunder ; lop their nobles
" To the bare roots whence most of 'em first
 sprung ;
" Enslave the rout, whom smarting will make humble
" Turn out their droning senate and possess
" That seat of empire which our souls were fram'd
 for."

Pier. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world :
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service ;
And, by your bounty quicken'd, they're resolved
To serve your glory, and revenge their own :
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th' alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence

Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease ;
After this night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till Venice owns us for her lords.

Pier. How lovelily the Adriatic whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine ? Devouring flames !
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Bed. Now if any
Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told : the general doom is seal'd ;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pier. I must confess, you there have touch'd my
weakness,
I have a friend ; hear it ! such a friend,
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you :
He knows the very business of this hour ;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it :
We've chang'd a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How ! all betray'd !

Pier. No—I've nobly dealt with you ;
I've brought my all into the public stock :
I've but one friend, and him I'll share amongst
you :

Receive and cherish him ; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless ; as my
tongue

Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here

Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFIER, with a Dagger.

Bed. His presence bears the shew of manly virtue.

Jaf. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncall'd,
I dare approach this place of fatal councils ;
But I'm amongst you, and by heav'n it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast ; but, if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curs'd assembled senate :
It shrinks not, tho' I meet a father there.
Would you behold this city flaming ? here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

Ren. You talk this well, Sir.

Jaf. Nay——by Heaven I'll do this.
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces :
You fear me a villain, and, indeed, it's odd
To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
Of matters that have been so well debated ;
But ! I come ripe with wrongs, as you with councils.
I hate this senate, am a foe to Venice ;
A friend to none, but men resolv'd like me
To push on mischief. Oh ! did you but know me,
I need not talk thus !

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him.

380

My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren. I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaf. Still I see

The cause delights ye not. Your friends survey me
As I were dangerous——But I come arm'd
Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
My Belvidera. Hoa; my Belvidera!

Bed. What wonder's next?

Jaf. Let me entreat you,
As I have henceforth hopes to call you friends,
That all but the ambassador, and this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,
Withdraw a while, to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Exeunt all but* BED. REN. JAF. PIER.]

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

Jaf. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Bel. Who,

Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love. 400
Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

Jaf. Indeed 'tis late.

Bel. Oh! I have slept and dreamt,

"And dreamt again. Where hast thou been, thou
loiterer?

"Tho' my eyes clos'd, my arms have still been
open'd:

" Stretch'd every way betwixt my broken slumbers,
" To search if thou wert come to crown my rest :
" There's no repose without thee : Oh ! the day
" Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow.
" Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good night.

Jaf. " Oh Belvidera ! we must change the scene,
" In which the past delights of life were tasted :
" The poor sleep little ; we must learn to watch
" Our labours late, and early every morning ;
" 'Midst winter frosts, thin clad, and fed with sparing,
" Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day."

Bel. Alas ! where am I ? whither is't you lead me ?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me.
You shake and tremble too ! your blood runs cold !
Heav'n's guard my love, and bless his heart with pa-
tience.

421

Jaf. That I have patience, let our fate bear wit-
ness,

Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I,
(Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
And I, the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part ! must we part ? Oh, am I then forsaken ?
" Will my love cast me off ? Have my misfortunes
" Offended him so highly, that he'll leave me ?"
Why drag you from me ; Whither are you going
My dear ! my life ! my love !

Jaf. Oh, friends !

Bel. Speak to me.

Jaf. Take her from my heart,
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.

I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows,

Ren. Rise, Madam, and command amongst your
servants.

Jaf. To you, Sirs, and your honours I bequeath
her,

And with her this ; when I prove unworthy——

[*Gives a Dagger.*]

You know the rest——Then strikes it to her heart ;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

Bel. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply ;
“ Or send me to some distant clime your slave ;
“ But let it be far off, lest my complainings
“ Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.

Jaf. “ No, Belvidera, I've contriv'd thy honour.
“ Trust to my faith, and be but fortune kind
“ To me, as I'll preserve that faith unbroken ;
“ When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height
“ Shall gather all the gazing world about thee,
“ To wonder what strange virtue plac'd thee there.
“ But if we ne'er meet more.”

Bel. O ! thou unkind one ;
Ne'er meet more ! have I deserv'd this from you ;
Look on me, tell me, speak, thou fair deceiver.
Why am I separated from thy love ? 460
If I am false, accuse me, but if true,
Don't, pr'ythee don't, in poverty forsake me,
But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.

Yet hear me, yet recall me—

[*Exeunt REN. BED. and BEL.*]

Jaf. Oh! “my eyes,

“Look not that way, but turn yourselves a while

“Into my heart, and be wean’d altogether.”

My friend, where art thou?

Pier. Here, my honour’s brother.

Jaf. Is Belvidera gone?

Pier. Renault has led her

Back to her own apartment; but by Heav’n,

Thou must not see her more, till our work’s over.

Jaf. No!

Pier. Not for your life.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre, wert thou but she,

How I would pull thee down into my heart,

Gaze on thee, till my eye-strings crack’d with love;

“Till all my sinews, with its fire extended,

“Fix’d me upon the rack of ardent longing:” 480

Then, swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,

Come, like a panting turtle to thy breast;

On thy soft bosom hovering, bill and play,

Confess the cause why last I fled away;

Own ’twas a fault, but swear to give it o’er,

And never follow false ambition more.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

“ Enter AQUILINA and her Maid.

“ Aquilina.

“ TELL him I am gone to bed ; tell him I am not at
“ home ; tell him I’ve better company with me, or
“ any thing ; tell him, in short, I will not see him,
“ the eternal troublesome vexatious fool : He’s worse
“ company than an ignorant phyfician—I’ll not be
“ difturb’d at thefe unfeafonable hours.

“ *Maid.* But, madam ! He’s here already, juft enter’d the doors.

“ *Aqui.* Turn him out again, you unnecessary,
“ ufelefs, giddy brain’d afs : If he will not be gone,
“ fet the houfe a fire, and burn us both : I’d rather
“ meet a toad in my difh, than that old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

13

Enter ANTONIO.

“ *Ant.* Nacky, Nacky, Nacky—How doft do,
“ Nacky ? Hurry, durry. I am come, little Nacky ;
“ paft eleven o’clock, a late hour ; time in all con-
“ fciences to go to bed, Nacky—Nacky, did I fay ?
“ Ay, Nacky, Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina,
“ quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky,
“ Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky, queen Nacky—
“ Come, let’s to bed—you Fubbs, you Pug you

“ ——— you little pufs ——— Purre, Tuzzy ——— I am a
“ fenator.

“ *Aqui.* You are a fool, I am fure.

“ *Ant.* May be fo too, fweet-heart : never the
“ worfe fenator for all that. Come, Nacky, Nacky,
“ let’s have a game at romps, Nacky.

“ *Aqui.* You would do well, Signor, to be trouble-
“ fome here no longer, but leave me to myfelf; be
“ fober, and go home, Sir.

“ *Ant.* Home, Madona !

“ *Aqui.* Ay, home, Sir. Who am I? 32

“ *Ant.* Madona, as I take it, you are my—you are
“ —thou art my little, Nacky, Nacky ——— that’s all.

“ *Aqui.* I find, you are refolv’d to be troublefome;
“ and fo, to make fhort of the matter in few words, I
“ hate you, deteft you, loath you, I am weary of you,
“ fick of you—hang you, you are an old, filly, imper-
“ tinent, impotent, folicitous coxcomb; crazy in your
“ head, and lazy in your body; love to be meddling
“ with every thing, and, if you had not money, you
“ are good for nothing.

“ *Ant.* Good for nothing! Hurry, durry, I’ll try
“ that prefently. Sixty-one years old, and good for
“ nothing: that’s brave: [*To the Maid*] Come, come,
“ come Mrs. Fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a feafon:
“ Go, turn out, I fay, it is our will and pleasure to be
“ private fome moments ——— out, out, when you are
“ bid to——[*Puts her out and locks the door*] Good
“ for nothing, you fay?

“ *Aqui.* Why, what are you good for?

“ *Ant.* In the firft place, Madam, I am old, and
“ confequently very wife, very wife, Madona &c

“ mark that ? In the second place, take notice, if you
“ please, that I am a senator ; and, when I think fit,
“ can make speeches, Madona. Hurry durry, I can
“ make a speech in the senate-house, now and then—
“ would make your hair stand an end, Madona.

“ *Aqui.* What care I for your speeches in the
“ senate-house ? if you would be silent here, I should
“ thank you.

“ *Ant.* Why I can make speeches to thee too, my
“ lovely Madona ; for example :—

“ My cruel Fair one, since it is my fate,

“ That you should with your servant angry
“ prove,

“ Though late at night, I hope 'tis not too late

“ With this to gain reception for my Love.

[*Takes out a purse of Gold, and at every pause shakes it.*]

“ —There's for thee, my little Nicky Nacky—take it,
“ here take it—I say take it, or I'll throw it at your
“ head—how now rebel ? 70

“ *Aqui.* Truly, my illustrious senator, I must con-
“ fess, your honour is at present, most profoundly
“ eloquent indeed.

“ *Ant.* Very well : Come, now let's sit down, and
“ think upon't a little—come, sit, I say—sit down
“ by me a little, my Nicky Nacky. A—[*sits down.*]
“ Hurry durry—good for nothing—

“ *Aqui.* No, Sir, if you please, I can know my dis-
“ tance, and stand.

“ *Ant.* Stand ! How, Nacky up, and I down ?
“ Nay, then, let me exclaim with the poet,

" Shew me a case more pitiful who can,

" A standing woman and a falling man. 83

" Hurry, durry—not sit down—see this, ye gods!

" You won't sit down?

" *Aqui.* No, sir.

" *Ant.* Then look you now; suppose me a bull, a

" Bafan-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus

" up I get, and with my brows, thus bent—I broo,

" I say, I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down,

" will you—I broo——

" [*Bellows like a bull, and drives her about.*

" *Aqui.* Well, Sir, I must endure this. [*She fits*

" *down*] Now your honour has been a bull, pray

" what beast will your worship please to be next?

" *Ant.* Now, I'll be a senator again, and thy lover,

" little Nicky Nacky. [*He fits by her.*] Ah! toad,

" toad, toad, toad! Spit in my face a little, Nacky, spit

" in my face, pr'ythee, spit in my face never so little:

" Spit but a little bit—spit, spit, spit—spit—when you

" are bid, I say—do, pr'ythee spit, —now, now,

" now, spit; what you won't spit, will you? then I'll

" be a dog. 102

" *Aqui.* A dog, my Lord!

" *Ant.* Ay a dog—and I'll give thee, this t'other

" purse, to let me be a dog—and use me like a dog a

" little. Hurry durry—I will—here 'tis——

[*Gives the purse.*

" *Aqui.* Well, with all my heart. But let me be

" seech your dogship to play your tricks over as fast

" as you can, that you may come to stinking the soon-

" er, and be turn'd out of doors, as you deserve.

“ *Ant.* Ay, ay—no matter for that—that shan’t
 “ move me—[*He gets under the table.*] Now, bough,
 “ waugh, waugh, waugh, bough, waugh.—[*Barks*
 “ *like a dog.*”

“ *Aqui.* Hold, hold, hold, Sir, I beseech you :
 “ What is’t you do ? If curs bite, they must be kick’d,
 “ Sir : Do you see, kick’d thus.

“ *Ant.* Ay, with all my heart : Do, kick, kick on ;
 “ now I am under the table, kick again—kick
 “ harder—harder yet, bough, waugh, waugh,
 “ waugh, bough—odd, I’ll have a snap at thy shins
 “ —bough, waugh, waugh, waugh, bough—odd,
 “ she kicks bravely—— 122

“ *Aqui.* Nay, then I’ll go another way to work with
 “ you : And I think here’s an instrument fit for the
 “ purpose ? [*Fetches a whip and a bell.*] What, bite
 “ your mistress, sirrah ? out of door, you dog, to ken-
 “ nel, and be hang’d—bite your mistress by the legs,
 “ you rogue—— [*She whips him.*

“ *Ant.* Nay, pr’ythee Nacky, now thou art too
 “ loving : Hurry durry, odd, I’ll be a dog no longer.

“ *Aqui.* Nay none of your fawning and grinning :
 “ But be gone, or here’s the discipline. What, bite
 “ your mistress by the leg, you mungrel ? Out of
 “ doors—hout, hout, to kennel, sirrah, go.

“ *Ant.* This is very barbarous usage, Nacky, very
 “ barbarous : look you, I will not go—— I will
 “ not stir from the door, that I resolve——hurry
 “ durry, what, shut me out ? [*She whips him out.*

“ *Aqui.* Ay, and if you come here any more to-
 “ night, I’ll have my footmen lug you, you cur ?
 “ What, bite your poor mistress, Nacky, sirrah ? 141

Enter Maid.

" Heav'ns ! Madam, what's the matter ?

[He howls at the door like a dog.]

" *Aqui.* Call my footmen hither presently.

Enter two Footmen.

" *Maid.* They're here already, Madam ; the house
" is all alarm'd with a strange noise, that no body
" knows what to make of.

" *Aqui.* Go, all of you, and turn that troublesome
" beast in the next room out of my house——If I
" ever see him within these walls again, without my
" leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues——
" I'll have you poison'd, all poison'd like rats ; every
" corner of the house shall stink of one of you ; go,
" and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So ;
" now for my Pierre.

" Thus, when the god-like lover is displeas'd,

" We sacrifice our fool, and he's pleas'd.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

A Chamber. Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. I'm sacrific'd ! I'm sold ! betray'd to shame !
Inevitable ruin has enclos'd me !

" No sooner was I to my bed repair'd

" To weigh and (weeping) ponder my condition ;

“ But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care 161
 “ My peace and honour was entrusted, came,
 “ (Like Tarquin) ghastly, with infernal lust.
 “ Oh, thou Roman Lucrece !
 “ Thou could’st find friends, to vindicate thy wrong !
 “ I never had but one, and he’s prov’d false :
 He that should guard my virtue, has betray’d it ;
 Left me ! Undone me ! Oh, that I could hate him !
 Where shall I go ? Oh, whither, whither, wander ?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
 When these poor arms are ready to receive her ?
 “ Oh ! ’tis in vain to struggle with desires,
 “ Strong is my love to thee ; for, every moment
 “ I’m from thy sight, the heart within my bosom,
 “ Mourns like a tender infant in its cradle,
 “ Whose nurse had left it. Come, and with the songs
 “ Of gentle love, persuade it to its peace.
 “ *Bel.* I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own
 me ;
 “ ’Tis grown a rebel, to be rul’d no longer ;
 “ Scorns the indulgent bosom that first lull’d it, 180
 “ And, like a disobedient child, disdains
 “ The soft authority of Belvidera.

Jaf. There was a time——

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
 When Belvidera’s tears, her cries, and sorrows,
 Were not despis’d ; when, if she chanc’d to sigh,
 Or look’d but sad——there was indeed a time,
 When *Jaffier* wou’d have ta’en her in his arms,

Eas'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her, till he found the cause.
But let her now weep seas ;

Cry, till she rend the earth ; sigh, till she burst
Her heart asunder ; still he bears it all
Deaf as the winds, and as the rocks unshaken.

“ *Jaf.* Have I been deaf ? Am I that rock unmov'd ?
“ Against whose root, tears beat, and sighs are sent
“ In vain ? have I beheld thy sorrows calmly ?
“ Witness against me, Heavens, have I done this ?
“ Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
“ And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me. 200
“ Oh ! thou too rashly censur'st of my love ;
“ Could'st thou but think, how I have spent this night
“ Dark, and alone, no pillow to my head,
“ Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
“ Thou would'st not, Belvidera, sure thou would'st
not

“ Talk to me thus ; but like a pitying angel,
“ Spreading thy wings, come fettle on my breast
“ And hatch warm comforts there, e're sorrows
freeze it.

“ *Bel.* Why then, poor mourner, in what baleful
corner

“ Hast thou been talking, with that witch, the night ?
“ On what cold stone hast thou been stretch'd along,
“ Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
“ To mix with theirs, the accents of thy woes ?
“ Oh ! now I find the cause my love forsakes me ;
“ I am no longer fit to bear a share
“ In his concerns—My weak female virtue
“ Must not be trusted : 'tis too frail and tender.”

Jaf. Oh, Portia, Portia ! What a soul was thine ?

Bel. That Portia was a woman ; and when Brutus,

Big with the fate of Rome, (Heav'n guard thy safety !)

Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind ;

She let him see her blood was great as his,

Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart

Fit to partake his troubles as his love.

Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower,

Thou gav'st last night in parting with me ; strike it

Here to my heart ; and as the blood flows from it,

Judge if it run not pure, as Cato's daughter's.

“ *Jaf.* Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,

“ Unworthy so much virtue. Teach me how 230

“ I may deserve such matchless love as thine,

“ And see with what attention I'll obey thee.

“ *Bel.* Do not despise me : that's the all I ask.

“ *Jaf.* Despise thee ! Hear me——

“ *Bel.* Oh ! Thy charming tongue,

“ Is but too well acquainted with my weakness ;

“ Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart

“ Dissolves within my breast ; till with clos'd eyes

“ I reel into thy arms, and all's forgotten.

“ *Jaf.* What shall I do ?

“ *Bel.* Tell me ; be just, and tell me,

“ Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face ?

“ Why am I made a stranger ? Why that sigh,

“ And I not know the cause ? Why, when the world

“ Is wrapp'd in rest, why chuses then my love

- " To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
 " Loathing his bed, and these desiring arms ?
 " Why are these eyes blood-shot with tedious watch-
 ing ?
 " Why starts he now, and looks as if he wish'd
 " His fate were finish'd ? Tell me, ease my fear } 250
 " Left, when we next time meet, I want the power
 " To search into the sickness of thy mind,
 " But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.

Jaf. Oh, Belvidera !

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain ?

Jaf. Ha ! a villain ?

Bel. Yes, to a villain ! Why at such an hour
 Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches,
 " That looks as hell had drawn them into league ?"
 Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
 Was I deliver'd with such dreadful ceremonies ?
To you, Sirs, and to your honours I bequeath her,
And with her this : Whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart.

Oh ! why's that rest conceal'd from me ? Must I
 Be made the hostage of a hellish trust ?

For such I know I am ; that's all my value.

But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,

I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves ;

Straight to the senate, tell 'em all I know,

270

All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaf. Is this the Roman virtue ; this the blood
 That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter ?
 Would she have e'er betray'd her Brutus ?

Bel. No :

For Brutus trusted her. Wert thou so kind,
What would not *Belvidera* suffer for thee ?

Jaf. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.

“ *Bel.* Look not upon me as I am, a woman :

“ But as a bone, thy wife, thy friend ; who long

“ Has had admission to thy heart, and there

“ Study’d the virtues of thy gallant nature.

“ Thy constancy, thy courage, and thy truth,

“ Have been my daily lesson : I have learn’d ’em,

“ And, bold as thou, can suffer or despise

“ The worst of fates for thee, and with thee share
‘em.”

Jaf. Oh, you divinest Powers look down and hear

“ My prayers ! instruct me to reward this virtue !”

Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further ;

Think I’ve a tale to tell will shake thy nature, . 290

Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk’st of,

Into vile tears and despicable sorrows :

Then if thou should’st betray me !——

Bel. Shall I swear ?

Jaf. No, do not swear : I would not violate

Thy tender nature, with so rude a bond :

But as thou hop’st to see me live my days,

And love thee long, lock this within thy breast :

I’ve bound myself, by all the strictest sacraments,

Divine and human——

300

Bel. Speak !

Jaf. To kill thy father,——

Bel. My father !

Jaf. Nay, the throats of the whole senate
 Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He, amongst us,
 That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
 Is damn'd. "How rich and beauteous will the face
 "Of ruin look, when these wide streets run blood!
 "I, and the glorious partners of my fortune,
 "Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead,
 "Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety,
 "Smiling, shalt see the wonders of our daring;
 "And when night comes, with praise and love receive
 me.

Bel. Oh!

Jaf. Have a care, and shrink not even in thought:
 For if thou dost——

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.
 Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
 Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
 Murder my father! tho' his cruel nature 320
 Has persecuted me to my undoing;
 Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,
 With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
 The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?
 And can'st thou shed the blood, that gave me being?
 Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
 Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
 Mix with hir'd slaves, bravoës, and common stabbers,
 "Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains!" join
 With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
 To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaf. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've engag'd
 With men of souls; fit to reform the ill
 Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them

But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, e'er fraud and vice were fashion.

Bel. What's he, to whose curst hands last night
thou gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story,
Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury. 340

Jaf. Speak on, I charge thee.

Bel. O my love! If e'er

Thy Belvidera's peace deserv'd thy care,
Remove me from this place. Last night, last night!

Jaf. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the pow'r of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed;
But that vile wretch approach'd me, "loose, unbut-
ton'd,

"Ready for violation:" Then my heart
Throbb'd with its fears: Oh, how I wept and sigh'd,
And shrunk and trembled! wish'd in vain for him
That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

Jaf. Patience, sweet Heav'n, 'till I make ven-
geance sure.

Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou gav'st
him,

And with upbraiding smiles, he said, *Behold it:*

This is the pledge of a false husband's love:

And in my arms, then press'd, and would have clasp'd
me;

But with my cries, I scar'd his coward heart,

Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell. 360

These are thy friends ! with these thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

Jaf. No more : I charge thee keep this secret
close.

Clear up thy sorrows ; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more ; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour ;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.

Bel. Oh ! Should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaf. Return no more ! I would not live without
thee

Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again ?

Jaf. Anon, at twelve

I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms :

Come like a travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.

Bel. Indeed !

Jaf. By all our loves.

Bel. 'Tis hard to part :

But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.

Farewel ; remember twelve.

380

[Exit.

Jaf. Let Heav'n forget me,

When I remember not thy truth, thy love.

" How curs'd is my condition, toss'd and jostled

" From every corner ; fortune's common fool,

" The jest of rogues, an instrumental ass,

" For villains to lay loads of shame upon,

" And drive about just for their ease and scorn."

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Jaffier.

Jaf. Who calls?

Pier. A friend, that could have wish'd
Th' have found thee otherwise employed. What
hunt

A wife, on the dull soil! Sure a staunch husband
Of all hounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,
Never be wean'd from caudles and confessions?
What feminine tales hast thou been list'ning to,
Of unair'd shirts, catarrhs and tooth ach, got
By thin-sol'd shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus into corners
To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind. 401

Jaf. May not a man then trifle out an hour
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

Pier. Not in a cause like ours.

Jaf. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm, call'd Lechery, has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Would'st thou think it? Renault
(That mortify'd old wither'd winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest;
I found him out for watering at my wife;
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:
Faith! she has some temptation, that's the truth
on't.

Pier. He durst not wrong his trust.

Jaf. 'Twas something late, though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

Pier. Was she in bed ?

Jaf. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets,
White as her bosom, Pierre, dish'd neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste 420
Oh ! how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him !

Pier. Patience guide me !
He's us'd no violence ?

Jaf. No, no ; out on't, violence !
Play'd with her neck ; brush'd her with his grey
beard ;
Struggl'd and touz'd ; tickl'd her till she squeak'd a
little,

May be, or so—but not a jôt of violence—

Pier. Damn him.

Jaf. Ay, so say I : but hush, no more on't.
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet : “ the’ no man knows
“ What fate he's born too.” Sure it is near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders :
Will the ambaffador be here in person ?

Pier. No, he has sent commission to that villain
Renault,

To give the executing charge :
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper ; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late. 440

Jaf. Fear not, I am cool as patience.
“ Had he completed my dishonour, rather

"Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
"I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue."

Pier. He's yonder, coming this way thro' the hall;
His thoughts seem full.

Jaf. Pr'ythee retire, and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to some trial;
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pier. Be careful, then.

[*Exit.*

Jaf. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What! be a devil, take a damning oath
For shedding native blood! Can there be a sin
In merciful repentance? Oh, this villain!

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse and peevish: What a slave is man
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him!
Dispatch the tool her husband—that were well.
Who's there?

Jaf. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally, 460
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge, is
very well.

Jaf. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? Beats her pulse even;
Neither too hot nor cold?

Ren. What means that question?

Jaf. Oh! women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,
And never fix'd. Was it not boldly done,
Even at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd

(Attempting treasure too) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine ? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me ?

Jaf. Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy virtue ! I have try'd it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it in thy keeping : for I know thee.

Ren. Know me !

Jaf. Ay, know thee. There's no fallhood in thee ;
Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.
Now would'st thou cut my throat, or I cut thine. 480

Ren. You dare not do't.

Jaf. You lie, Sir.

Ren. How !

Jaf. No more,
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

*Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO,
DURAND, BROMVEIL, and the rest of the Conspirators.*

Ren. Spinosa, Theodore !

Spin. The same.

Ren. You are welcome.

Spin. You are trembling, Sir.

Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed, and I am aged ;
Full of decay and natural infirmities : [*Pier. re-enters.*
We shall be warm, my friends, I hope to-morrow.

Pier. 'Twas not well done ; thou should'st have
stroak'd him,
And not have gall'd him.

Jaf. Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heav'n ! Where am I ? beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me ! What a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature ——— hush, my heart.

Ren. My friends, 'tis late ; are we assembled all ?

" Where's Theodore ?

500

Theod. " At hand.

Ren. " Spinosa.

Spin. " Here.

Ren. " Bromveil.

Brom. " I'm ready.

Ren. " Durand and Brabe.

Dur. " Command us.

We are both prepar'd."

Omnes. All ; all.

Ren. " Mezzano, Revillido,

" Ternon, Retrofi ! Oh ! you're men, I find,

Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons.

To-morrow's rising sun must see you all

Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready ?

Pier. All, all.

Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand must possess
St. Mark's ; you, Captain, know your charge already
'Tis to secure the ducal palace : " You,

" Brabe, with an hundred more, must gain the Secque :

" With the like number, Bromveil, to the Procurale ;"

Be all this done with the least tumult possible, 521

'Till in each place you post sufficient guards :

Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.

Jaf. Oh ! reverend cruelty ! damn'd bloody villain !

Ren. During this execution, Durand, you

Must in the midst keep your battalia fast ;

And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon

That may command the streets ; " whilst Revillido,

" Mezzano, Ternon, and Retrofi guard you."

This done, we'll give the general alarm,

Apply petards, and force the ar's'nal gates ;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon (if it dare resist)
Batter to ruin. But above all I charge you,
Shed blood enough ; spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition ; if there lives a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood. 540

Jaf. Merciless, horrid slave—Ay, blood enough !
Shed blood enough, old Renault ! how thou charm'st
me !

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell, till
fate

Join us again, or sep'rate us for ever :
First let's embrace. Heav'n knows who next shall
thus

Wing ye together ; but let's all remember,
We wear no common cause upon our swords :
Let each man think that on his single virtue
Depends the good and fame of all the rest ;
Eternal honour, or perpetual infamy.

“ Let us remember through what dreadful hazards

“ Propitious fortune hitherto has led us :

“ How often on the brink of some discovery

“ Have we stood tottering, yet still kept our ground

“ So well, that the busiest searchers ne'er could fol-
low

“ Those subtle tracks, which puzzled all suspicion ?”
You droop, Sir.

Jaf. No ; With most profound attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Ren. " 'Tho' there be yet few hours 'twixt them
and ruin,

" Are not the senate lull'd in full security, 561

" Quiet and satisfy'd, as fools are always ?

" Never did so profound repose fore-run

" Calamity so great. Nay, our good fortune

" Has blinded the most piercing of mankind,

" Strengthen'd the fearfullest, charm'd the most sus-
pectful,

" Confounded the most subtle : for we live,

" We live, my friends, and quickly shall our life

" Prove fatal to these tyrants." Let's consider,

That we destroy oppression, avarice,

A people nurs'd up equally with vices

And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,

And such as without shame she cannot suffer.

Jaf. Oh, Belvidera ! take me to thy arms,
And shew me where's my peace, for I have lost it.

[*Exit.*

Ren. Without the least remorse then, let's resolve

" With fire and sword t' exterminate these tyrants ;

" And when we shall behold those curs'd tribunals

" Stain'd by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,

" Burning with flames rather from Heav'n than ours,

" The raging, furious, and unpitying soldier 581

" Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms

" Of gasping wretches ; death in every quarter ;

" With all that sad disorder can produce

" To make a spectacle of horror ; then,

"Then let us call to mind, my dearest friends,
 "That there is nothing pure upon the earth ;
 "That the most valu'd things have most allays,
 "And that in change of all these vile enormities,"
 Under whose weight this wretched country labours,
 The means are only in our hands to crown them.

Pier. And may those pow'rs above, that are propitious

To gallant minds, record this cause and bless it.

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
 Should there, my friends, be found among us one
 False to this glorious enterprize, what fate,
 What vengeance were enough for such a villain ?

Elk. Death here without repentance, Hell hereafter.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if as here I stand,
 Lifted by fate among her darling sons, 600
 Tho' I had one only brother, dear by all
 The strictest ties of nature ; "tho' one hour
 "Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
 "One only love, and that but of each other,
 "Still fill'd our minds ;" could I have such a friend
 Join'd in this cause, and had but ground to fear
 He mean't foul play ; may this right hand drop from
 me,

If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
 And stab him to the heart before you. Who,
 Who would do less ? Would'st thou not, Pierre, the
 same ?

Pier. You've singled me, Sir, out for this hard
 question,

As if 'twere started only for my sake :

Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor?

Ren. No: but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less. Come, Sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?

Spin. He left the room just now, in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observ'd him;
During the time I took for explanation, 620
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother,
"His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,
"All which betray'd a wavering spirit in him,
"That labour'd with reluctancy and sorrow."
What's requisite for safety, must be done
With speedy execution; he remains
Yet in our power: I, for my own part, wear
A dagger——

Pier. Well.

Ren. And I could wish it——

Pier. Where?

Ren. Buried in his heart.

Pier. Away; we're yet all friends,
No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood among us.

Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the
house,

Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.

Pier. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the
blood

That's dear to me? is't you, or you, or you, Sir! 640
What, not one speak! how you stand gaping all

On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!
 Yet not a word ! Then, Sir, I'll tell you a secret ;
 Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue. [To Ren.

Ren. A coward !—— [Handles his sword.

Pier. Put up thy sword, old man ;
 Thy hand shakes at it. Come let's heal this breach ;
 I am too hot, we yet may all live friends.

Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pier. Again ! Who's that ? 650

Spin. 'Twas I.

The. And I.

Ren. And I.

Om. And all.

Ren. " Who are on my side ?

Spin. " Every honest sword.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pier. One such word more, by Heav'n I'll to the
 senate,

And hang ye all, like dogs, in clusters.

Why weep your coward swords half out their sheaths ?

Why do you not all brandish them like mine ?

You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

Ren. Go to the senate, and betray us ! haste !

Secure thy wretched life ; we fear to die

Less than thou dar'st be honest.

Pier. That's rank falsehood.

Fear'st not thou death ! Fie, there's a knavish itch

In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.

Had Jaffier's wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.

Faugh how that stinks ! thou die, thou kill my friend !

Or thou ! or thou ! with that lean wither'd face,

Away, disperse all to your several charges,

And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you.
I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst
for,

And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence ! hence, I say. [*Exit Renault angrily.*]

Spi. I fear we've been to blame,
And done too much.

The. " 'Twas too far urg'd against the man you
lov'd.

Rev. " Here take our swords, and crush them with
your feet."

Spi. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pier. Nay, now you've found

The way to melt, and cast me as you will.

" I'll fetch this friend, and give him to your mercy :

" Nay, he shall die, if you will take him from me.

" For your repose, I'll quit my heart's best jewel ;

" But would not have him torn away by villains,

" And spiteful villany.

Spi. " No, may you both

" For ever live, and fill the world with fame.

Pier. " Now y' are too kind." Whence rose all
this discord ?

Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd !

How near a fall was all we'd long been building !

What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,

If one, the bravest and the best of men,

Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion,

Butcher'd by those, whose cause he came to cherish !

" Oh ! could you know him all, as I have known
him ;

" How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,

" You would not leave this place till you had seen him ;

" Humbled yourselves before him, kifs'd his feet,

" And gain'd remission for the worst of follies."

Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,

And to your loves, me better recommend,

That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my friend.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Rialto. Enter JAFFIER and BELVIDERA.

Jaffier.

WHERE dost thou lead me ? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend. Oh, my charming ruin !
Where are we wandering ?

Bel. To eternal honour.

To do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations. Thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserv'd
From horrid violation. Every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour ;

And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice.

Jaf. Rather, remember him, who, after all
 The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,
 In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
 Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
 To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.
 Why wilt thou damn me ?

20

Bel. Oh, inconstant man !

How will you promise ; how will you deceive !

Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
 Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
 And let thy dagger do its bloody office.

" Oh ! that kind dagger, Jaffier, how 'twill look

" Struck thro' my heart, drench'd in my blood to
 th' hilt ;

" Whilst these poor dying eyes shall with their tears

" No more torment thee, then thou wilt be free ;"

Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live,

Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust

Of that infernal devil, " that old fiend,

" That's damn'd himself, and would undo man-
 kind."

Last night, my love !

Jaf. Name it not again :

It shews a beastly image to my fancy,

Will wake me into madness. " Oh, the villain !

" That durst approach such purity as thine

" On terms so vile ;" Destruction, swift destruction,

Fall on my coward head, " and make my name

" The common scorn of fools," if I forgive him :

" If I forgive him ! If I not revenge

" With utmost rage, and most unstaying fury,
" Thy sufferings, thou dear darling of my life.

Bel. Delay no longer then, but to the senate,
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd :

Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd : how near's the fatal hour.
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed. " Save the poor tender lives

" Of all those little infants, which the swords
" Of murderers are whetting for, this moment.
" Think thou already hear'st their dying screams ;
" Think that thou see'st their sad distracted mothers,
" Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity :
" With torn dishevel'd hair, and streaming eyes,
" Their naked mangled breasts, besmear'd with
blood :

" And even the milk, with which their fondled babes

" Softly they hush'd, dropping in anguish from 'em :

" Think thou see'st this, and then consult thy heart.

" *Jaf.* Oh !

" *Bel.* Think too, if you lose this present minute,

" What miseries the next day brings upon thee :

" Imagine all the horrors of that night ;

" Murder and rapine, waste and desolation,

" Confus'dly raging : " Think what then may prove
My lot ; the ravisher may then come safe

And, 'midst the terror of the public ruin,

Do a damn'd deed ; " perhaps may lay a train

" To catch thy life : Then where will be revenge,

" The dear revenge that's due to such a wrong ? "

Jaf. By all Heaven's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee ;

For every word thou speak'st, strikes thro' my heart,
" Like a new light, and shews it, how 't has wander'd,"

Just what thou'lt made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson ; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friend ? Ah ! take me quickly ;
Secure me well before that thought's renew'd ; 81
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera ?

Jaf. No ; thou'rt my soul itself ; wealth, friendship, honour,

All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee. " Methinks, when in thy arms,
" Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute 's more
" Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
" Why was such happiness not given me pure ?
" Why dash'd with cruel wrongs, and bitter warnings ?"

Come, lead me forward, now, like a tame lamb
To sacrifice. Thus, in his fatal garlands
Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the wanton skips and plays,
Trots by th' enticing flatt'ring priestess' side,
And much transported with its little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain ;
Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

Enter Officer and six Guards.

Off. Stand! who goes there?

Bel. Friends.

100

"Jaf. Friends, Belvidera! Hide me from my friends:

"By Heav'n, I'd rather see the face of hell,

"Than meet the man I love."

Off. But what friends are you?

Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of Venice.

Off. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the council,
Who are now sitting.

Jaf. Sir, you shall be obey'd,
*"Hold, brute, stand off! none of your paws upon
me."*

Now the lot's cast, and, fate, do what thou wilt.

[Exeunt guarded.]

SCENE II.

*The Senate-House, where appear sitting the Duke of
VENICE, PRIULI, ANTONIO, and eight other Se-
nators.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak, why are we assembled here this night?

What have you to inform us of, concerns
The state of Venice' honour, or its safety?

Pri. Could words express the story I've to tell
you,

Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes ; but there is cause
We all should weep, tear off these purple robes, 120
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heav'n :
Heav'n knows, if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more.

All Sen. How !

Pri. Nay, we stand

Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes : nay, the hour too fix'd ;
The swords, for ought I know, drawn e'en this mo-
ment,

And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning ; but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, tho' we were.

[*A noise without.*]

Room, room, make room for some prisoners—

“ Sen. Let's raise the city.”

Enter Officer and Guards.

Duke. Speak, there. What disturbance?

Off. Two prisoners have the guards seiz'd in the
street, 140

Who say, they come t' inform this reverend senate
About the present danger.

Enter JAFFIER and Officer.

All. Give 'em entrance—Well, who are you?

Jaf. A villain.

Ant. Short and pithy :—

The man speaks well.

Jaf. Would every man, that hears me,
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been contriv'd
Against this state ; and you've a share in't too.
If you are a villain, to redeem your honour
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaf. Think not, that I to save my life came
hither ;

I know its value better ; but in pity
To all those wretches, whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice :
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slave capitulates, 160
Give him the tortures.

Jaf. That you dare not do :
Your fear won't let you, not the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of :
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from
me.

Cowards are scar'd with threat'nings ; boys are whipt
Into confessions : but a steady mind

Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.

Give him the tortures ! Name but such a thing

Again, by heav'n I'll shut these lips for ever.

Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at.

Ant. A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant ;

" A damn'd bloody-minded fellow."

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaf. For myself full pardon,

Besides the lives of two and twenty friends,

Whose names are here enroll'd—Nay, let their crimes

Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths

And sacred promise of this reverend council, 180

That, in a full assembly of the senate

The thing I ask be ratify'd. Swear this,

And I'll unfold the secret of your danger.

" *All.* We'll swear."

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaf. By all the hopes

Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,

Swear.

" *All.* We all swear.

" *Jaf.* To grant me what I've ask'd,"

Ye swear ?

All. We swear.

Jaf. And, as ye keep the oath,

May you, and your posterity be blest'd,

Or curs'd for ever.

All. Else be curs'd for ever.

Jaf. Then here's the list, and with't the full disclosure

Of all that threatens you. [*Delivers a paper.*]

Now, fate, thou hast caught me. 199

"*Ant.* Why, what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats is here ! I'll warrant you, not one of these fellows but has a face like a lion. I dare not so much as read their names over."

Duke. Give order that all diligent search be made To seize these men, ~~their~~ characters are public ; The paper intimates their rendezvous To be at the house of a fam'd Grecian courtesan, Call'd Aquilina ; see that place secur'd.

"*Ant.* What, my Nicky Nacky ! Hurry, hurry !

"Nicky Nacky, in the plot—I'll make a speech :

"Most noble senators,

"What headlong apprehensions drive you on,

"Right, noble, wise, and truly solid senators,

"To violate the laws and rights of nations ?

"The lady is a lady of renown ;

"'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,

"And, tho' I say't myself, as many more

"Can say, as well as I—

"*2 Sen.* My lord, long speeches

"Are frivolous here, when dangers are so near us.

"We all well know your interest in that lady ; 221

"The world talks loud on't.

"*Ant.* Verily I have done ;

"I say no more.

"*Duke.* But, since he has declar'd

"Himself concern'd, pray, Captain, take great caution

“ To treat the fair-one as becomes her character ;

“ And let her bed-chamber be search'd with decency.”

Yoa, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.

Jaf. Would the chains of death
Had bound me safe, e'er I had known this minute.

“ I've done a deed will make my story hereafter

“ Quoted in competition with all ill ones :

“ The history of my wickedness shall run
Down thro' the low traditions of the vulgar,

“ And boys be taught to tell the tale of Jaffier.”

Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

Jaf. Sir, if possible, 239
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose
me ;

Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I I appease thee ?

[*Exit guarded:*

Off. [*Without.*] More traitors ; room, room,
room, make room there.

Duke. How's this ? guards !

Where are our guards ? Shut up the gates, the treason's

Already at our doors.

Enter Officer.

Off. My lords, more traitors,
Seiz'd in the very act of consultation ;

Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.
Bring in the prisoners.

Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVELLIDO, and other Conspirators, in fetters.

Pier. You, my lords, and fathers,
(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of Venice ;
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains, upon the limbs
That have so often labour'd in your service ?
Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
On those, that bring you conquest home, and honours ?

Duke. Go on ; you shall be heard, Sir.

" Ant. And be hang'd too, I hope." 260

Pier. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers ?
When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you ;
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours ;
When you, great Duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, the Adriatic, plough'd,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prowls than yours,
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians
The task of honour, and the way to greatness ?
Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
To stipulate the terms of su'd-for peace ?
And this my recompence ! if I'm a traitor,

Produce my charge ; or shew the wretch that's base
And brave enough, to tell me I'm a traitor.

Duke. Know you one Jaffier ? [*Consp. murmur.*]

Pier. Yes, and know his virtue.

His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings
From a hard father taught me first to love him.

Enter JAFFIER guarded.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Pier. My friend too bound ! nay then 280
Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.

Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine,
They're but one thing ? These reverend tyrants,
Jaffier,

Call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother ?

Jaf. To thee, I am the falsest, veriest slave,
That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.

All our fair hopes, which morning was t' have
crown'd,

Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

Pier. So, then all's over :
Venice has lost her freedom, I my life.
No more ! Farewel !

Duke. Say ; will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy ?

Pier. Curs'd be your senate : curs'd your constitu-
tion :

The curse of growing factions and divisions,
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,

And make the robes of government you wear,
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me,

Duke. Pardon, or death?

Pier. Death! honourable death! 300

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can
give,

No shameful bonds, but honourable death.

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your
prisoners.

Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.

[*Ex. all the Senators.*]

Pier. Come, where's my dungeon? Lead me to
my straw:

It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard
To do the senate service.

Jaf. Hold, one moment.

Pier. Who's he disputes the judgment of the senate?
Presumptuous rebel—on— [Strikes Jaffier.

Jaf. By Heav'n, you stir not!

I must be heard; I must have leave to speak.

Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow:

Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?

But use me as thou wilt, thou can'st not wrong me,

For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries:

Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,

With pity and with charity behold me;

"Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance;"

But, as there dwells a godlike nature in thee, 320

Listen with mildness to my supplications.

Pier. What whining monk art thou? what holy
cheat,

That would'st inroach upon my credulous ears,

And canst'th thus vilely ? Hopec ! I know thee not ;
 " Dissemble and be nasty." Leave, hypocrite.

Jaf. Not know me, Pierre !

Pier. No, I know thee not ! What art thou ?

Jaf. Jaffier, thy friend, thy once lov'd valu'd friend !

Tho' now deserv'dly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pier. Thou Jaffier ! thou, my once lov'd valu'd friend !

By Heav'n's thou ly'st ; the man so call'd, my friend,
 Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant ;
 Noble in mind, and in his person lovely ;
 Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart :
 But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
 Poor, even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect ;
 All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee :
 Prithee avoid ; nor longer cling thus round me,
 Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

Jaf. I have not wrong'd thee, by these tears I
 have not,

340

" But still am honest, true, and, hope too, valiant ;
 " My mind still full of thee, therefore still noble.
 " Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
 " Detest me utterly. Oh ! look upon me,
 " Look back, and see my sad, sincere submission !
 " How my heart swells, as e'en 'twould burst my
 bosom ;
 " Fond of its goal, and labouring to be at thee.
 " What shall I do ? what say, to make thee hear me ?

Pier. Hast thou not wrong'd me ? Dar'st thou call
 thyself

That once lov'd, valu'd friend of mine,

And swear thou hast not wrong'd me ? Whence these chains ?

Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment ?

Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one ?

Jaf. All's true ; yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

Pier. What's that ?

Jaf. To take thy life, on such conditions
The council have propos'd : thou, and thy friends,
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pier. Life ! ask my life ! Confess ! record myself
A villain, for the privilege to breathe ! 360
And carry up and down this cursed city,
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthenfome to itself, a few years longer ;
To lose it, may be, at last, in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou
art !

No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men, like thee, are fit to live in't.

Jaf. By all that's just——

Pier. Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

Jaf. Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave
thee,

Till, to thyself, at least thou'rt reconcil'd,
However thy resentment deal with me.

Pier. Not leave me !

Jaf. No ; thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave ;

Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
 On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience
 Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty : 380
 Lie at thy feet, and kiss 'em, tho' they spurn me;
 Till wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
 And raise me to thy arms, with dear forgiveness.

Pier. Art thou not——

Jaf. What ?

Pier. A traitor ?

Jaf. Yes.

Pier. A villain.

Jaf. Granted.

Pier. A coward, a most scandalous coward;
 Spiritless, void of honour; one who has sold
 Thy everlasting fame, for shameless life !

Jaf. All, all, and more, much more : my faults
 are numberless.

Pier. And would'st thou have me live on terms
 like thine ?

Bafe, as thou'rt false——

Jaf. No; 'tis to me that's granted :
 The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
 In recompence for faith and trust so broken.

Pier. I scorn it more, because preserv'd by thee ;
 And, as when first my foolish heart took pity 400
 On thy misfortunes, fought thee in thy miseries,
 Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
 Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plung'd thee,
 To rank thee in my list of noble friends ;
 All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
 Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,

Give with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n :
 So I restore it back to thee again ;
 Swearing by all those pow'rs which thou hast vi-
 olated,

Never from this curs'd hour to hold communion,
 Friendship, or interest, with thee, tho' our years
 Were to exceed those limited the world.

Take it—farewel—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaf. Say thou wilt live then.

Pier. For my life, dispose it

Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre !

Pier. No more.

Jaf. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
 But languish after thee, and ache with gazing. 420

Pier. Leave me—Nay, then thus, thus I throw thee
 from me ;

And curses, great as is thy falshood, catch thee. [*Ex.*

Jaf. Amen.

He's gone, my father, friend, preserver,
 And here's the portion he has left me :

[*Holds the dagger up.*

This dagger. Well remember'd ! with this dagger,

I gave a solemn vow of dire importance ;

Parted with this, and Belvidera together.

Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no farther :

No, I'll esteem it, as a friend's last legacy ;

Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,

Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,

That when they meet, they start not from each other.

So now for thinking—A blow, call'd traitor, villain,

Coward, dishonourable coward ; fough !

" Oh ! for a long sound sleep, and so forget it."
Down, busy devil !

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Whither shall I fly ?
Where hide me and my miseries together ?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted ? 440
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,
Not daring to look up to that dear face
Which us'd to smile, ev'n on my faults ; but, down,
Bending these miserable eyes on earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jas. Mercy ! kind Heav'n has surely endless
stores,
Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted :
" Let wretches, loaded hard with guilt, as I am,
" Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the bur-
then,
" Creep with a remnant of that strength they've left
" Before the footstool of that Heav'n they've in-
jur'd.
Oh, Belvidera ! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawl'd on earth. " Now, if thou'st virtue, help
me
" Take me into thy arms, and speak the words of
peace
" To my divided soul, that wars within me,
" And raises every sense to my confusion :
" By Heav'n, I'm tottering on the very brink
" Of peace, and thou art all the hold I've left.

" *Bel.* Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty:

" I know thou'lt cause to mourn, to mourn, my
Jaffier, 460

" With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailing :

" Thou'lt lost——

" *Jaf.* Oh ! I have lost what can't be counted ;"
My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoic'd in,
Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me :
T'would break thy pitying heart to hear the story.
" What shall I do ? Resentment, indignation,
" Love, pity, fear, and mem'ry how I've wrong'd
him

" Distract my quiet with the very thought on't,

" And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.

Bel. What has he done ?

" *Jaf.* Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.

" *Bel.* Why ?

" *Jaf.* Oh ! he has us'd me ! yet, by Heav'n, I
bear it ;

" He has us'd me, Belvidera, but first swear,

" That when I've told thee, thou wilt not loath me
utterly,

" Tho' vilest blots, and stains appear upon me ;

" But still, at least with charitable goodness,

" Be near me in the pangs of my affliction ; 480

" Nor scorn me, Belvidera, as he has done.

" *Bel.* Have I then e'er been false, that now I'm
doubted ?

" Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into distrust ?

" Why thought unfit to hear my love's complaining :

" *Jaf.* Oh !

Bel. Tell me.

Jaf. Bear my failings, for they're many.

" Oh, my dear angel ! in that friend, I've lost

" All my soul's peace ; for ev'ry thought of him

" Strikes my sense hard, and dead's it in my brains !

" Would'st thou believe it ?

Bel. Speak.

Jaf. Before we parted,

E're yet his guards had led him to his prison,

Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,

With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,

" Humbling myself, almost beneath my nature,

As at his feet I kneel'd and su'd for mercy,

" Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearest,

" In which we've liv'd so many years together, 500

With a reproachful hand he dash'd a blow :

He struck me, Belvidera ! by Heav'n, he struck me !

Buffeted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.

Am I a Coward ? Am I a villain ? Tell me :

Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so ?

Damnation ! Coward !

Bel. Oh ! forgive him, Jaffier ;

And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,

What will they do to-morrow ?

Jaf. Ah !

Bel. To-morrow,

When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies

Of a tormenting and a shameful death ;

His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,

Insulted o'er, by a vile butchering villain !

What will thy heart do then ? Oh ! sure 'twill stream,

Like my eyes now.

Jaf. What means thy dreadful story ?
 Death, and to-morrow ! Broken limbs and bowels !
 “ Insulted o’er by a vile butchering villain ! 520
 “ By all my fears, I shall start out to madness
 “ With barely guessing, if the truth’s hid longer.”

Bel. The faithless senators, ’tis they’ve decreed it :
 They say, according to our friends’ request,
 They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage :
 Declare their promis’d mercy all is forfeited :
 False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,
 Warrants are pass’d for public death to-morrow.

Jaf. Death ! doom’d to die ! condemn’d unheard !
 unpleaded !

Bel. Nay, cruel’st racks and torments are pre-
 paring
 To force confession from their dying pangs.
 Oh ! do not look so terribly upon me !
 How your lips shake, and all your face disorder’d !
 What means my love ?

Jaf. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me——
 Strong temptations
 Wake in my heart.

Bel. For what ?

Jaf. No more, but leave me.

Bel. Why ?

Jaf. Oh ! by Heav’n, I love thee with that fond-
 ness,

I would not have thee stay a moment longer
 Near these curs’d hands : Are they not cold upon thee !

*[Pulls the Dagger half out of his Bosom,
 and puts it back again.]*

Bel. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast, is softer ease
Than downy pillows, deck'd with leaves of roses.

Jaf. Alas ! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis fill'd
with :

Fly, e'er they gall thee. There's a lurking serpent
Ready to leap, and sting thee to the heart :
Art thou not terrify'd ?

Bel. No.

Jaf. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought
me.

Bel. Hah !

Jaf. Where's my friend ? my friend, thou smiling
mischief !

Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late ; " thou should'st
have fled.

" When thy guilt first had cause ;" for dire revenge
Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans !
Hark, how he groans ! his screams are in my ears
Already ; see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder ! Perjur'd senate !
Murder—Oh !—Hark thee, traitress, thou hast done
this !

Thanks to thy tears, and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak ! Oh, thou bewitching creature !

[*Fumbling for his dagger.*]

Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trem-
bler,

Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe ;
'Tis thy own citadel—Hah—yet stand off.

Heav'n must have justice, " and my broken vows

"Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy."

I'll wink, and then 'tis done——

Bel. What means the lord

Of me, my life, and love? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so? "Nay, why am I thus treated?

[Draws the dagger and offers to stab her.]

"What wilt thou do?" Ah! do not kill me, Jaffier:

"Pity these panting breasts, and trembling limbs,

"That us'd to clasp thee when thy looks were
milder,

"That yet hang heavy on my unpurg'd soul;

"And plunge it not into eternal darkness.

Jaf. Know, Belvidera, when we parted last,

I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,

To be thy portion if I e'er prov'd false. 530

On such condition, was my truth believ'd:

But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

[Offers to stab her again.]

Bel. Oh! Mercy!

Kneeling.

Jaf. Nay, no struggling.

Bel. Now then, kill me,

[Leaps on his neck, and kisses him.]

While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,

Kiss thy revengeful lips, and die in joys

Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

Jaf. I am, I am, a coward, witness Heav'n,

Witness it, earth, and every being witness:

'Tis but one blow! yet by immortal love,

I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.

[He throws away the dagger, and embraces her.]

The seal of Providence is sure upon thee;

And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders.

Oh! thou wert either born to save or damn me.
By all the power that's given me o'er my foul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
"By the victorious love, that still waits on thee;"
Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever. 600
Fall at his feet, cling round his rev'rend knees,
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears,
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,
Crush him in th' arms, torture him with thy soft-
ness;
Nor till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast conquer'd me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V, SCENE I.

An Apartment in Priuli's House. Enter PRIULI solus.

Priuli.

WHY, cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! dishonour
And deathless infamy is fallen upon me.
Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded;
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease

Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory,
To make it rot and stink to after-ages.

"Curst be the fatal minute when I got her ;

"Or wou'd that I'd been any thing but man,

"And rais'd an issue which would ne'er have wrong'd
me.

"The miserable creatures (man excepted)

"Are not the less esteem'd, tho' their posterity

"Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers :

"The vilest beasts are happy in their offspring,

"While only man gets traitors, whores, and villains.

"Curs'd be the names, and some swift blow from
fate

"Lay this head deep, where mine may be forgotten."

Enter BELVIDERA, in a long mourning veil.

Bel. He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That for three years has left an only child 20
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin !—oh——

Pri. What child of sorrow

Art thou, that comest wrapt in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were tow'rd's a grave ?

Bel. A wretch who from the very top of happiness

Am fall'n into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

"*Pri.* Indeed thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted
sorrows ;

"Would I could help thee !

Bel. 'Tis greatly in your power :

" The world too speaks you charitable ; and I,

" Who ne'er ask'd alms before, in that dear hope,

" Am come a begging to you, Sir.

" For what ?

Bel. Oh ! well regard me, is this voice a strange one ?

" Consider too, when beggars once pretend

" A case like mine, no little will content 'em."

Pri. What would'st thou beg for ?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness. [*Throws up her veil.*

By the kind tender names of child and father, 41

Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

Pri. My daughter !

Bel. Yes, your daughter, " by a mother

" Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,

" Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,

" Dear to your arms. By all the joys she gave you,

" When in her blooming years she was your treasure,

" Look kindly on me ? In my face behold

" The lineaments of her's you've kiss'd so often,

" Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.

Pri. Thou art my daughter.

Bel. Yes"—and you've oft told me,

With smiles of love and chaste paternal kisses,

I'd much resemblance of my mother.

Pri. Oh !

" Had'st thou inherit'd her matchless virtues,

" I'd been too blest'd.

Bel. Nay, do not call to memory

" My disobedience ; but let pity enter

" Into your heart, and quite deface th' impression.

" For could you think how mine's perplex'd, what
sadness,

" Fears and despairs distract the peace within me,

" Oh! you would take me in your dear, dear arms,

" Hover with strong compassion o'er your young
one,

" To shelter me with a protecting wing

" From the black gather'd storm, that's just, just
breaking.

Pri. Don't talk thus.

Bel. Yes, I must; and you must hear too.

I have a husband.

Pri. Damn him.

Bel. Oh! do not curse him;

He would not speak so hard a word towards you

On any terms, howe'er he deals with me.

Pri. Ha! what means my child?

" *Bel.* Oh! there's but this short moment

" 'Twixt me and fate: yet send me not with curses

" Down to my grave; afford me one kind blessing

" Before we part: just take me in your arms,

" And recommend me with a prayer to Heav'n, 80

" That I may die in peace; and when I'm dead—

" *Pri.* How my soul's catch'd!

" *Bel.* Lay me, I beg you, lay me

" By the dear ashes of my tender mother.

" She would have pity'd me, had fate yet spar'd her.

" *Pri.* By Heav'n, my aching heart forebodes much
mischief!

" Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.

" *Bel.* No; I'm contented.

Pri. Speak.

Bel. No matter.

Pri. Tell me :

“ By yon blefs’d Heav’n, my heart runs o’er with
fondness.

Bel. Oh !

Pri. Utter’t.

Bel. Oh ! my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.

Pri. Kill thee !

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he pass’d his faith
And covenant against your state and senate, 100
He gave me up a hostage for his truth :
With me a dagger and a dire commission,
Whene’er he fail’d, to plunge it thro’ this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
T’ attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail’d, and blefs’d me with success !
He came, confess’d, betray’d his dearest friends
For promis’d mercy. Now they’re doom’d to suffer,
Gall’d with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t’ appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood th’ atone-
ment.

Pri. Heav’ns !

“ *Bel.* Think you saw what pass’d at our last part-
ing :

“ Think you beheld him like a raging lion,

“ Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,

“ Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain

“ Of burning fury : think you saw his one hand

" Fix'd on my throat, whilst the extended other
 " Grasp'd a keen threat'ning dagger : Oh! 'twas
 thus

" We last embrac'd, when, trembling with revenge
 " He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my bosom
 " Presented horrid death. Cry'd out, my friends,
 " Where are my friends ? swore, wept, rag'd, threat-
 en'd, lov'd,

" For yet he lov'd, and that dear love preserv'd me
 " To this last trial of a father's pity.
 " I fear not death ; but cannot bear a thought
 " That that dear hand should do th' unfriendly of-
 fice."

If I was ever then your care, now hear me ;
 Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
 Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Pri. Oh, my heart's comfort ! 131

Bel. Will you not, my father ?

Weep not, but answer me.

Pri. By Heav'n I will.

Not one of them but what shall be immortal.
 Canst thou forgive me all my follies past ?
 I'll henceforth be indeed a father ; never,
 Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
 Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life, 139
 Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee :
 Peace to thy heart. Farewel.

Bel. Go, and remember,

'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter ANTONIO.

“ Hum, hum, ha !

“ Signor Priuli, my lord Priuli, my lord, my lord,
“ my lord. Now we lords love to call one another
“ by our titles. My lord, my lord, my lord,—Pox
“ on him, I am a lord as well as he. And so let
“ him fiddle—I’ll warrant him he’s gone to the se-
“ nate-house, and I’ll be there too, soon enough
“ for somebody. Odd—here’s a tickling speech
“ about the plot ; I’ll prove there’s a plot with a
“ vengeance,—would I had it without book ; let me
“ see —

“ Most reverend senators,

“ That there is a plot, surely by this time no man
“ that hath eyes or understanding in his head, will
“ presume to doubt ; ’tis as plain as the light in the
“ cucumber—no—hold there—cucumber does not
“ come in yet—’tis as plain as the light in the sun,
“ or as the man in the moon, even at noon-day.
“ It is indeed, a pumpkin-plot, which, just as it
“ was mellow, we have gathered, and now we have
“ gathered it, prepared and dressed it, shall we throw
“ it like a pickled cucumber out of the window ? No :
“ that it is not only a bloody, horrid, execrable,
“ damnable, and audacious plot : but it is, as I may
“ so say, a faucy plot : and we all know, most re-
“ verend fathers ; that which is sauce for a goose is
“ sauce for a gander : therefore, I say, as those
“ blood-thirsty ganders of the conspiracy would have
“ destroyed us geese of the senate, let us make haste

" to destroy them ; so I humbly move for hanging—
 " Hah ! hurry durry,—I think this will do ; though
 " I was something out at first, about the fun and the
 " cucumber.

Enter AQUILINA.

" *Aqui.* Good morrow, senator.

" *Ant.* Nacky, my dear Nacky ; morrow, Nacky,
 " odd I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very
 " jovial—ha a a a—kifs me, Nacky ! how dost thou
 " do, my little tory rory strumpet ? Kifs me, I say,
 " huffy, kifs me. 480

" *Aqui.* Kifs me, Nacky ! hang you, Sir coxcomb ;
 " hang you, Sir.

" *Ant.* Haity taity, is it so indeed ? With all my
 " heart, faith—*Hey, then up go we.* Faith, *bey—then*
 " *up go we,* dum dum derum dump. [Sings.]

" *Aqui.* Signor.

" *Ant.* Madona.

" *Aqui.* Do you intend to die in your bed ?

" *Ant.* About threescore years hence much may be
 " done, my dear.

" *Aqui.* You'll be hang'd, Signor.

" *Ant.* Hang'd, sweet-heart, pr'ythee be quiet ;
 " hang'd quoth-a ; that's a merry conceit with all my
 " heart ; why thou jok'st, Nacky ; thou art given to
 " joking, I'll swear. Well, I protest, Nacky, nay I
 " must protest, and will protest, that I love joking
 " dearly. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kifs
 " thee for joking, and towse thee for joking ; and
 " odd, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about

“ that business for joking too, odd I have ; and *Hey,*
“ *then up we go, dum dum derum dump.* [Sings.

“ *Aqui.* See you this, Sir ? [Draws a Dagger.

“ *Ant.* O laud, a dagger ! Oh, laud ! it is na-
“ turally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight
“ on’t ; hide it for Heaven’s sake ; I cannot look
“ that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh ! oh !
“ hide it.

“ *Aqui.* Yes, in your heart I’ll hide it.

“ *Ant.* My heart ! what hide a dagger in my heart’s
blood !

“ *Aqui.* Yes, in thy heart, thy throat, thou pam-
per’d devil ;

“ Thou hast help’d to spoil my peace, and I’ll have
vengeance

“ On thy curs’d life, for all the bloody senate,
“ The perjur’d faithless senate. Where’s my lord,
“ My happiness, my love, my god, my hero,
“ Doom’d by thy accursed tongue, among the rest,
“ T’ a shameful rack ? By all the rage that’s in me,
“ I’ll be whole years in murdering thee.

“ *Ant.* Why, Nacky,

“ Wherefore so passionate ? What have I done ?
“ What’s the matter, my dear Nacky ? Am not I thy
“ love, thy happiness, thy lord, thy hero, thy senator,
“ and every thing in the world, Nacky ? 421

“ *Aqui.* Thou ! think’st thou, thou art fit to meet
my joys :

“ To bear the eager clasps of my embraces ?

“ Give me my Pierre, or—

Ant. Why, he's to be hang'd, little Nacky;

" Trufs'd up for treason and so forth, child.

" *Aqui.* Thou ly'ft; ſtep down thy throat that
hellifh ſentence,

" Or 'tis thy laſt: ſwear that my love ſhall live,

" Or thou art dead.

" *Ant.* Ah! h h h.

" *Aqui.* Swear to recall his doom;

" Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.

" *Ant.* I do! Now if ſhe would but kick a little
bit: one kick now, Ah! h h h.

" *Aqui.* Swear or—

" *Ant.* I do by theſe dear fragrant foots and little
toes, ſweet as e e e e, my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky,
faith and troth.

" *Aqui.* How!

439

" *Ant.* Nothing but untie thy ſhoe-ſtrings a little,
that's all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's
all, all.

" *Aqui.* Nay, then—

" *Ant.* Hold; hold; thy love, thy lord, thy hero,
ſhall be preſerv'd and ſafe.

" *Aqui.* Or may this poniard

" Ruſt in thy heart.

" *Ant.* With all my ſoul.

" *Aqui.* Farewel.

[Exit.

" *Ant.* Adieu. Why, what a bloody-minded, in-
veterate, termagant ſtrumpet, have I been plagued
with! Oh! h h! Yet no more! nay, then I die,
I die—I'm dead already." [Stretches himſelf out.

SCENE II.

A Garden. Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Final destruction seize on all the world.
Bend down ye heav'ns, and shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion ;
“ Scorch it with elemental flames to one curs'd cin-
der,
“ And all us little creepers in't, call'd men,
“ Burn, burn to nothing : but let Venice burn,
“ Hotter than all the rest : Here kindle hell, 460
“ Ne'er to extinguish ; and let souls hereafter
“ Groan here, in all those pains which mine feels
now.”

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. My life——

[Meeting him.

Jaf. My plague——

[Turning from her.

Bel. Nay, then I see my ruin.

If I must die !

“ *Jaf.* No, death's this day too busy ;
“ Thy father's ill-tim'd mercy came too late.
“ I thank thee for thy labours though ; and him too :
“ But all my poor, betray'd, unhappy friends,
“ Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour ;
“ And yet I live.

Bel. Then be the next my doom :

“ I see, thou hast pass’d my sentence in thy heart,

“ And I’ll no longer weep, or plead against it,

“ But with the humblest, most obedient patience,

“ Meet thy dear hands and kiss ’em when they wound
me.

“ Indeed I’m willing, but I beg thee do it

“ With some remorse ; and when thou giv’st the
blow,

“ View me with eyes of a relenting love, 480

“ And shew me pity, for ’twill sweeten justice.”

Jaf. Shew pity to thee !

Bel. Yes ; and when thy hands,

“ Charg’d with my fate, come trembling to the deed,

“ As thou hast done a thousand thousand times

“ To this poor breast, when kinder rage hath brought
thee,

“ When our stung hearts have leap’d to meet each
other,

“ And melting kisses seal’d our lips together ;

“ When joys have left me gasping in thy arms :

“ So let my death come now, and I’ll not shrink
from’t.”

Jaf. Nay, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy ;
But answer me to what I shall demand,
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.

Bel. I will, when I’ve done weeping—

Jaf. Fie, no more on’t——

How long is’t since that miserable day

We wedded first.

Bel. Oh ! h h !

Jaf. Nay, keep in thy tears,
Lest they unman me too. 500

Bel. Heav'n knows I cannot ;
The words you utter sound so very sadly,
The streams will follow—

Jaf. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.

Bel. But was't a miserable day ?

Jaf. A curs'd one.

Bel. I thought it otherwise ; and you've often
sworn,

“ In the transporting hours of warmest love,

“ When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn,
you blest'd it.

Jaf. 'Twas a rash oath.

Bel. Then why am I not curs'd too ?

Jaf. No, Belvidera ; by th' eternal truth,
I doat with too much fondness.

Bel. Still so kind !

Still then do you love me ?

Jaf. “ Nature in her workings,

“ Inclines not with more ardour to creation,

“ Than I do now towards thee :” Man ne'er was
blest'd,

Since the first pair met, as I have been. 520

Bel. Then sure you will not curse me ?

Jaf. No, I'll blest thee.

I came on purpose, Belvidera, to blest thee,

'Tis now, I think, three years, we've liv'd together,

Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till, reverend grown for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together ;
There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.

" *Jaf.* When will that be? [*Sighing.*]

" *Bel.* I hope, long ages hence.

" *Jaf.* Have I not hitherto, (I beg thee tell me
" Thy very fears) us'd thee with tender'ft love?

" Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee?

" Did I e'er frown when Belvidera smil'd?

" Or by the least unfriendly word, betray

" Abating passion? have I ever wrong'd thee?

" *Bel.* No.

" *Jaf.* Has my heart, or have my eyes, e'er wander'd

" To any other woman?

" *Bel.* Never, never—I were the worst of false
ones, should I accuse thee. 540

" I own, I've been too happy, blest'd above

" My sex's charter."

Jaf. Did I not say, I came to bless thee?

Bel. You did.

Jaf. Then hear me, bounteous Heav'n :
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing,
With a continual giving hand : let peace,
Honour, and safety, always hover round her ;
Feed her with plenty ; let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning ?
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts ; and prop her virtue,
To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd ;
And comfort her with patience in our parting.

Bel. How ! Parting, parting !

Jaf. Yes, for ever parting ;
 I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon heav'n,
 That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
 We part this hour for ever. 569

Bel. O ! call back
 Your cruel blessing ; stay with me and curse me.

" Jaf. No, 'tis resolv'd.

" Bel. Then hear me too, just Heav'n :
 " Pour down your curses on this wretched head,
 " With never-ceasing vengeance ; let despair,
 " Danger and infamy, nay all, surround me ;
 " Starve me with wantings ; let my eyes ne'er see
 " A sight of comfort, nor my heart know peace ;
 " But dash my days with sorrow, nights with horrors ;
 " Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury,
 " To make me mad enough for what I lose,
 " If I must lose him. If I must ? I will not,
 " Oh ! turn and hear me ?" 571

Jaf. Now held, heart, or never. 572

Bel. By all the tender days we've liv'd together,
 " By all our charming nights, and joys that crown'd
 'em," 573

Fity my sad condition ; speak, but speak,

Jaf. Oh ! h h !

Bel. By these arms, that now cling round thy
 neck,

" By this dear kiss, and by ten thousand more,"
 By these poor streaming eyes— 582

Jaf. Murder ! unhold me :

By th' immortal destiny that doom'd me
 [Draws his dagger.

To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer ;

Resolve to let me go, or see me fall——

Bel. Hold, Sir, be patient."

Jaf. Hark, the dismal bell *[Passing Bell tolls.]*

Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects me:
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he dy'd, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewel, for ever.

Bel. Leave thy dagger with me,
Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting;
Oh! my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

[Going out, looks back at him.]

Jaf. Yet stay:

We have a child, as yet a tender infant;
Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone;
Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour, 600
But never let him know his father's story;
I charge thee, guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune, or his name.

Now—nearer yet— *[Approaching each other.]*

Oh! that my arms were rivetted
Thus round thee ever! But my friend! my oath!
This, and no more. *[Kisses her.]*

Bel. Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en such care of,
I'll giv't him truly.

Jaf. So now farewell.

Bel. For ever?

Jaf. Heav'n knows for ever; all good angels guard
thee. *[Exit.]*

Bel. All ill ones sure had charge of me this mo-
ment:

Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights,
 "Which I must now mourn out in widow'd tears;
 "Blasted be every herb, and fruit, and tree;
 "Curs'd be the rain that falls upon the earth,
 "And may the general curse reach man and beast."

Oh! give me daggers, fire or water: 620
 How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the
 waves

Huzzing and booming round my sinking head.
 Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
 Oh! there's all quiet, here all rage and fury:
 The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;
 I long for thick substantial sleep: Hell! hell!
 Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
 If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am.

"Enter PRIULI, and Servants.

"Who's there? [They seize her.

"Pri. Run, seize, and bring her safely home;

"Guard her as you would life: Alas, poor creature!

"Bel. What to my husband! then conduct me
 quickly?

"Are all things ready; Shall we die most gloriously?

"Say not a word of this to my old father:

"Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing
 flowers!

"Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Opening, discovers a scaffold, and a wheel prepared for the Execution of PIERRE ; then enter officer, PIERRE, and Guards, " a Friar," Executioner, and a great Rabble.

" *Off.* Room, room there—stand all by, make room for the prisoner."

Pier. My friend not come yet ?

" *Fri.* Why are you so obstinate? 640

" *Pier.* Why you so troublesome, that a poor wretch can't die in peace,

" But you, like ravens, will be croaking round him—

" *Fri.* Yet Heav'n——

" *Pier.* I tell thee, Heav'n and I are friends :

" I ne'er broke peace with't yet, by cruel murders,

" Rapine, or perjury, or vile deceiving ;

" But liv'd in moral justice towards all men :

" Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,

" Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confine me.

" *Fri.* But an all-seeing judge——

" *Pier.* You say my conscience

" Must be my accuser ; I have search'd that conscience,

" And find no records there of crimes that scare me.

" *Fri.* 'Tis strange, you should want faith.

- “ *Pier.* You want to lead
 “ My reason blind-fold, like a hamper’d lion,
 “ Check’d of it’s nobler vigour; then when baited
 “ Down, to obedient tameness, make it couch
 “ And shew strange tricks, which you call signs of
 faith :
 “ So silly souls are gull’d, and you get money. 660
 “ Away; no more. Captain, I’d have hereafter
 “ This fellow write no lies of my conversion,
 “ Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.”

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Hold : eyes be dry ;
 Heart, strengthen me to bear
 This hideous sight, and humble me, to take
 The last forgiveness of a dying friend,
 Betray’d by my vile falsehood, to his ruin.
 Oh, Pierre !

Pier. Yet nearer.

Jaf. Crawling on my knees,
 And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee :
 How shall I look up to thy injur’d face,
 That always us’d to smile with friendship on me ?
 It darts an air of so much manly virtue,
 That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
 And stripes are fitter for me, than embraces.

Pier. Dear to my arms, tho’ thou’st undone my
 fame,
 I can’t forget to love thee. Pr’ythee, Jaffier,
 Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee ;
 I’m now preparing for the land of peace,

And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

Jaf. Good! I am the vilest creature, worse than
e'er

Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.

"Why was I sent for to be us'd thus kindly?

"Call, call me villain, as I am! describe

"The foul complexion of my hateful deeds:

"Lead me to th' rack, and stretch me in thy stead,

"I've crimes enough to give it its full load,

"And do it credit: thou wilt but spoil the use on't.

"And honest men hereafter bear its figure

"About them, as a charm from treacherous friend-
ship."

Offi. The time grows short, your friends are dead
already.

Jaf. Dead!

Pier. Yes, dead, Jaffier; they've all died like men
too,

Worthy their character.

Jaf. And what must I do?

Pier. Oh, Jaffier!

Jaf. Speak aloud thy burthen'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pier. Friend! Could'st thou yet be a friend, a ge-
nerous friend,

I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.

Heav'n knows, I want a friend.

Jaf. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

Pier. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.

Jaf. Yes, I will live :

But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd
At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.

Pier. Wilt thou ?

Jaf. I will, by Heav'n.

Pier. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh !—yet—shall I trust thee ?

Jaf. No ; I've been false already.

Pier. Dost thou love me ?

Jaf. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.

Pier. Curse on this weakness. [*He weeps.*]

Jaf. Tears ! Amazement ! Tears !

I never saw thee melted thus before ;
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom,
That must have vent : Tho' I'm a villain, tell me.

Pier. See'st thou that engine ?

[*Pointing to the Wheel.*]

Jaf. Why ?

Pier. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nation's quarrels, and been crown'd with conquest,
Be expos'd a common carcase on a wheel ?

Jaf. Hah !

Pier. Speak ! is't fitting ?

Jaf. Fitting !

Pier. Yes ; is't fitting ?

Jaf. What's to be done ?

Pier. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

Off. The day grows late, Sir.

Pier. I'll make haste. Oh, *Jaffier*! :
 Tho' thou'st betray'd me, do me some way justice.

◆ *Jaf.* No more of that: thy wishes shall be satisfied;
 I have a wife, and she shall bleed: my child too,
 Yield up his little throat, and all
 'T' appease thee——

[*Going away, Pierre holds him.*

Pier. No—this—no more. [*He whispers Jaffier.*

Jaf. Hah! is't then so?

Pier. Most certainly.

Jaf. I'll do it.

Pier. Remember!

Off. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready,

[*He and Jaffier ascend the scaffold.*

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;
 Keep off the rabble that I may have room
 To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
 Come.

[*Takes off his gown, executioner prepares to meet him.*

"*Fri.* Son.

"*Pier.* Hence, tempter.

"*Off.* Stand off, priest.

"*Pier.* I thank you, Sir."

[*To the Officer.*

You'll think on't?

[*To Jaffier.*

Jaf. 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.

Pier. Now, *Jaffier*! now I'm going. Now——

[*Executioner having bound him.*

Jaf. Have at thee,

Thou honest heart, then—here

[*Stabs him.*

And this is well too.

[*Stabs himself.*

"*Fri.* Damnable deed!"

Pier. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly—We have deceiv'd the senate.

Jaf. Bravely.

Pier. Ha, ha, ha——oh ! oh ! [*Dies.*

Jaf. Now, ye curs'd rulers,
Thus of the blood y'ave shed, I make libation
And sprinkle it mingling. May it rest upon you,
And all your race. Be henceforth peace a stranger
Within your walls ; let plagues and famine waste
Your generation—Oh, poor Belvidera !
Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her,
A token that with my dying breath I bless'd her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I'm sick—I'm quiet. [*Dies.*

“ *Off.* Bear this news to the senate,
“ And guard their bodies, till there's further orders.
“ Heav'n grant I die so well.” [*Scene shuts upon them.*

Soft Music. Enter BELVIDERA *distracted, led by two of
her Women, PRIULI and Servants.*

Pri. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying
Heav'n.

Bel. Come, come, come, come, come, nay, come
to bed.

Pr'ythee, my love. The winds ; hark how they
whistle ;

And the rain beats : Oh ! how the weather shrinks
me !

You are angry now, who cares ? Pish, no indeed,
Chuse then ; I say you shall not go, you shall not ;
Whip your ill-nature ; get you gone then ; Oh !

Are you return'd ? See, father, here he's come again :
Am I to blame to love him ? O, thou dear one,
Why do you fly me ? Are you angry still then ?
Jaffier, where art thou ? father why do you do thus ?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here some-
where.

Stand off, I say : What gone ? Remember't, tyrant :
I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't. "Renault's a nasty fellow ;
" Hang him, hang him, hang him."

Enter Officer.

Pri. News, what news ?

[Officer whispers Priuli.]

Off. Most sad, Sir ;

Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd Pierre, and next himself ;
Both fell together.

Pri. Daughter.

Bel. Ha ! look there !

My husband bloody and his friend too ! Murder !
Who has done this ? Speak to me, thou sad vision :
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanish'd—
Here they went down—Oh, I'll dig, dig the den up !
You shan't delude me thus. Hoa, Jaffier, Jaffier.
Peep up, and give me but a look. I have him !
I've got him, father : Oh ! "now how I'll smuggle
him !"

My love ! my dear ! my blessing ! help me ! help me !
They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewel— *[Dies.]*

“ *Maid.* She’s dead ;

“ Breathless and dead.”

Pri. Oh ; guard me from the sight on’t.

Lead me into some place that’s fit for mourning :

Where the free air, light, and the chearful sun,

May never enter : hang it round with black :

Set up one taper, that may last a day,

As long as I’ve to live ; and there all leave me ,

Sparing no tears, when you this tale relate,

But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.

[*Exeunt omnes.*



EPILOGUE.

*THE Text is done, and now for application,
And when that's ended, pass your approbation.
Though the Conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there :
And there's a certain faction fain would sway,
If they had strength enough, and damn this play :
But this the author bid me boldly say,
If any take this plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart.
Poets in honour of the truth should write,
With the same spirit brave men for it fight.
And though against him causeless hatreds rise,
And daily where he goes of late he spies
The scowls of sullen and revengeful eyes ;
'Tis what he knows, with much contempt, to bear,
And serves a cause too good to let him fear.
He fears no poison from an incens'd drab,
No ruffian's five-foot sword, nor rascal's stab ;
Nor any other snares of mischief laid,
Not a Rose-Alley cudgel ambuscade,
From any private cause where malice reigns,
Or general pique all blockheads have to brains ;
Nothing shall daunt his pen, when truth does call,
No, not the * picture-mangler at Guildhall.*

* He that cut the Duke of York's picture.

EPILOGUE.

*The rebel-tribe, of which that vermin's one,
Have now set forward, and their course begun ;
And while that prince's figure they deface,
As they before had massacred his name,
Durst their base fears but look him in the face.
They'd use his person as they've us'd his fame :
A face in which such lineaments they read
Of that great martyr's, whose rich blood they shed,
That their rebellious hate they still retain,
And in his son would murder him again.
With indignation then let each brave heart
Rouse and unite, to take his injur'd part ;
'Till royal love and goodness call him home,
And songs of triumph meet him as he come :
'Till Heav'n his honour and our peace restore,
And villains never wrong his virtue more.*

